

**University System Coordination and Planning in Ontario
1945 to 1996**

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education
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Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the
University of Toronto

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Doctor of Education, 1998

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Thesis Abstract

In the post-war period 1945 to 1996, numerous commissions, reports and task forces made recommendations with respect to arrangements and approaches that could facilitate interaction between universities and government and promote efficiencies and economies to be derived from a system-level approach to enrolment growth and academic program development.

This thesis identifies the various recommendations related to enhanced structures for system-level coordination and planning of Ontario universities from the perspective of what they reveal about the balance between university autonomy and government intervention. Specific initiatives to introduce greater planning and coordination in the development and funding of academic degree programs in Ontario are examined with a view to explaining their success, failure or transformation.

Findings suggest that the Ontario government generally preferred increased collective autonomy of the institutions to an increase in its own involvement in direct regulation of the university sector. A variety of initiatives were undertaken by the university collectivity in an attempt to ensure rational development of the sector but, proving too contentious, were largely abandoned.

The university collectivity has not been able to sustain broad support for collective decision-making processes that served to place limitations on the academic or research potential

of some or all of its member institutions. Yet, institutions appeared willingly to have conceded some autonomy to government in order to access additional public support or avoid decisions that would create inter-institutional conflict.

Government largely failed to provide ongoing leadership in the coordination and planning of university development. It has acted more like a referee between universities jockeying for status and greater access to public funds. Therefore, the roles that universities, individually and collectively, are expected to play in response to public policy objectives are largely determined by the individual institutions acting independently and competitively in response to financial incentives and disincentives built into government's exercise of its spending powers. This limits government's ability to ensure that the provincial support directed to universities is spent in the most effective, efficient and responsive manner. Responsibility for the degree to which the public interest is served rests predominantly with individual university decision-makers.

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Diana M. Royce
October 10, 1997

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Scope of Inquiry	1
1.1 Background	2
1.2 Limitations of this Study	3
1.3 Methodology	6
1.4 The Research Context for University-Government Relations in Ontario	9
1.5 The Broader Research Context	22
1.6 The Contribution of This Research to the Literature	27
Chapter 2: The Nature of University-Government Relations in Ontario	28
2.1 The Importance of Universities to Ontario Society	28
2.2 The Nature of University Autonomy	32
2.3 Accountability	40
2.4 Reconciling the Interests of the State with those of Autonomous Universities	45
2.5 Government Involvement in System-level Coordination and Planning	48
2.6 Coordinating Agencies as Structures for University System Coordination and Planning ...	52
2.6.1 <i>Master Planning</i>	54
2.6.2 <i>Budgeting</i>	55
2.6.3 <i>Academic Program Review</i>	56
2.6.4 <i>Policy Analysis and Intermediary Function</i>	57
2.7 Patterns and Structures for Coordination and Planning	57
2.8 Structures for Voluntary or Mandatory Coordination	60
2.9 A Brief Overview of System-wide Coordination in Ontario, Canada and the United States .	64
Chapter 3: Planning for Expansion	70
3.1 Post-War Expansion of Canadian Universities and the Role of the Federal Government ...	70
3.2 Provincial Government-University Relations in Ontario in the Post WWII Era	76
3.2.1 <i>An Emerging Provincial Role in Coordination and Planning</i>	82
3.2.2 <i>System Planning and the Creation of a University Collectivity</i>	88
3.2.3 <i>Planning for Growth</i>	93
3.2.4 <i>The Robarts Policy Statement on Universities: March 21, 1963</i>	94
3.2.5 <i>University Government in Canada, 1965</i> .	102
3.3 Managing Growth: The Introduction of Graduate Program Coordination and Planning ...	107
3.3.1 <i>The Commission to Study the Development of Graduate Programmes in Ontario Universities, 1966</i>	109
3.4 Developments in the 1970s: The Decade After	117
3.4.1 <i>Commission on the Relations between Universities and Governments, 1970</i>	119
3.4.2 <i>The Commission to Study the Rationalization of University Research, 1972</i>	125
3.5 The Search Begins for a Master Plan for Ontario	128
3.5.1 <i>The Commission on Post-Secondary Education in Ontario, 1972</i>	130
3.5.2 <i>Planning for Planning, 1974</i>	140
3.6 The Ontario Council on University Affairs, 1974	143
3.6.1 <i>System-Level Academic Program Coordination and Planning, 1974-1982: OCUA's Role in the Promotion of a University "System" and Institutional Role Differentiation</i>	145

3.7	The Search for Structure: A Debate on the Roles of Government and Universities in System Coordination and Planning in Ontario, 1980-1990	150
3.7.1	<i>Committee on the Future Role of Universities in Ontario, 1981</i>	153
3.7.2	<i>The Commission on the Future Development of the Universities of Ontario, 1984</i>	165
3.7.3	<i>The University of Northeastern Ontario 1974-1984</i>	176
3.8	OCUA - Introduction of the Corridor System of University Financing 1986, 1989, 1990	183
3.8.1	<i>The Report of the External Advisor to the Minister of Colleges and Universities on the Future Role and Function of the Ontario Council on University Affairs and its Academic Advisory Committee, July 1988</i>	192
Chapter 4: Coordination and Planning Across the Postsecondary Sector, 1990-1996		196
4.1	An Emphasis on Postsecondary Credit Transfer	196
4.2	Access and Accountability: University Responsiveness 1990-1997	202
4.2.1	<i>System Planning and Coordination Through the Back Door: University Accountability</i>	204
4.3	A Reconsideration of University Funding Policies and Instruments, 1993-1995	209
4.3.1	<i>Economic Constraint and University Rigidities</i>	211
4.3.2	<i>The OCUA Resource Allocation Review, 1993-1995</i>	217
4.4	Rediscovering the Foundations of University-Government Relations	232
4.4.1	<i>The Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education in Ontario</i>	237
Chapter 5: Coordination and Planning in Ontario: A Focus on Graduate Programming		251
5.1	Overview	251
5.2	The Nature of System-wide Academic Coordination and Planning	253
5.3	Ontario Universities in the 1960s: An Emerging Emphasis on Academic Coordination and Planning	255
5.3.1	<i>From Reaction to Action: The Universities' Response</i>	260
5.3.2	<i>Grasping the Nettle: Graduate Program Planning and the Advisory Committee on Academic Planning</i>	265
5.4	Restricting and Rationalizing Growth: 1971 to 1976	269
5.4.1	<i>Fiscal Constraints and Financial Imperatives</i>	276
5.4.2	<i>Growing Dissatisfaction with ACAP</i>	277
5.5	Protecting the Investment - Formula Suspension: 1976 to 1979	279
5.5.1	<i>Role of ACAP During the Freeze</i>	282
5.6	Improving the Planning Environment - Quinquennial Plans and Macroindicator Data	285
5.7	The First Quinquennium, 1979 to 1984: Consolidation	287
5.7.1	<i>Discussion of Sectoral Planning, 1980 to 1982</i>	293
5.7.2	<i>Final Report of the COU Special Committee to Review Graduate Planning, 1981</i>	296
5.7.3	<i>Structural Revision</i>	298
5.8	A Brief Overview of Program Coordination and Planning at the Undergraduate Level	301
5.8.1	<i>OCUA's Role in Undergraduate Program Planning</i>	308
5.9	Graduate Programs in the Second Quinquennium, 1984 to 1989: Refining the Objectives	314

5.10	The Third Quinquennium, 1989-1994: Rational Expansion	317
5.10.1	<i>Developments in the Third Quinquennium</i>	320
5.11	An Academic Planning Vacuum	323
5.11.1	<i>Role of AAC in Coordination and Planning</i>	325
5.11.2	<i>AAC Discussion Papers, 1988 - 1992</i>	329
5.11.3	<i>Five-Year Graduate Plans</i>	332
5.12	The Ministry's Role in Program Coordination and Planning in the 1990s	336
5.13	OCUA's Role in Program Coordination and Planning in the 1990s	340
5.14	Conclusions	345
 Chapter 6: Analysis and Conclusions		352
6.1	Trends in Recommendations and Advice with Respect to Coordination and Planning of the Ontario University System	352
6.1.1	<i>The Ontario Council on University Affairs: Purposeful Inadequacy</i>	359
6.1.2	<i>The Political Constraints on System Coordination and Planning in Ontario</i>	366
6.1.3	<i>Reaffirmation of the Informal Approach to System Coordination and Planning in Ontario</i>	373
6.1.4	<i>University-Government Relations in Ontario: A Relationship Among Bit Players</i>	374
6.1.5	<i>A Potential Role for the Ministry in System Development</i>	378
6.1.6	<i>Conclusions Regarding Structures for System Coordination and Planning in Ontario</i>	380
6.2	An Analysis of Coordination and Planning Efforts in Ontario to 1996	381
6.2.1	<i>Why Did Graduate Programm Planning Fail?</i>	388
6.2.2	<i>Why Were Universities Able to Accept the Quality Appraisals Process for Graduate Programs and Yet Reject Planning?</i>	388
6.2.3	<i>Why Has There Been so Much Emphasis on Graduate Program Coordination, Planning, Quality and Funding?</i>	392
6.2.4	<i>The Impact of OCUA and AAC on Coordination and Planning</i>	396
6.2.5	<i>Conclusions with respect to Coordination and Planning Efforts in Ontario</i>	399
6.3	Looking Back	403
6.4	Looking Ahead	410
 Tables		
Table 1:	Types of Planning in Ontario from the 1960s to the 1990s	351
Table 2:	Commissions, Reports and/or Initiatives Related to University-Government Relations, Coordination and Planning Undertaken in Ontario Since 1945	353
Table 3:	Provincial Ministers Responsible for Ontario Universities 1945-1997	369
Table 4:	Primary Locus of Responsibility for System Coordination and Planning in Ontario 1945 - 1997	385
Table 5:	Factors Affecting System Coordination and Planning in Ontario 1945-1996	411
 Appendices		
Appendix A:	Interviews	414
 Bibliography	 416

Chapter 1: Scope of Inquiry

Through an examination of commissions, reports and task forces undertaken between 1945 and 1996 that made recommendations pertaining to university system-level coordination and planning, and initiatives undertaken as a result of such recommendations, this thesis will attempt to explain why so little system-level university coordination and planning has resulted in Ontario. While some advisors were requested to recommend on ways and means of enhancing university system coordination and planned development, other advisors did so in the context of an examination of other issues. The goal, therefore, of this thesis in regard to the various documents analysed is not to summarize or critique them *per se*. Rather, the documents are analysed with a view to examining the factors that led to their preparation, the nature of their recommendations and the subsequent disposition of their advice. This thesis examines what the documents reveal about the Province of Ontario's ongoing struggle to find an appropriate balance between the perceived benefits of university autonomy and of rationally coordinated and planned expansion and contraction of the publicly funded university sector. The emphasis in examining each of the reports is on identifying the problems resulting from the lack of mechanisms for system-wide coordination and planning, the rationale for alternative structures and approaches to university-government relations, the reaction and response of relevant parties to such proposals and the outcome of any initiatives that were subsequently undertaken.

1.1 Background

From the 1840s, legislators responsible for university development in what would become the province of Ontario, envisioned a state university system composed of one provincial institution (the University of Toronto), surrounded by a constellation of affiliated colleges. However, the unanticipated proliferation of private, denominational university colleges, largely independent of the state, combined with steady growth in the perceived importance of universities to personal development, social mobility and economic prosperity substantially transformed the provincial interest and involvement in the provision of university education. Events of the period immediately following the conclusion of the second World War in 1945 acted as a catalyst to the aforementioned trends and triggered a desire on the part of government to expand publicly funded university education. There resulted profound changes in scale and scope, which were underwritten with public financial support.

Almost immediately in the wake of publicly funded expansion in the number of legally-autonomous institutions, the provincial government and the universities were engaged in study after study in a quest for advice on various aspects of university development. The ensuing reports repeatedly addressed the issue of enhanced system-wide coordination and planning. Report after report contained recommendations with respect to system-level structures, and mechanisms and policies that could facilitate interaction between universities and government and at the same time promote efficiencies and economies to be derived from a system-level approach to enrolment growth and academic program development.

Despite repeated requests for advice, and a chorus of recommendations for a greater degree of system-level university coordination and planning, very little action has been taken

by the provincial government or by the universities collectively. In the result, Ontario universities continue to enjoy a highly autonomous relationship with the provincial government, especially when compared to other jurisdictions of comparable size and scope in the United States where state agencies for coordination and planning are typically responsible for the development of the publicly funded university sector.

1.2 Limitations of this Study

This thesis identifies the various recommendations related to system-level coordination and planning for Ontario universities, examines in detail efforts to introduce greater system coordination and planning into the development and funding of university academic programs, and endeavours to explain why the degree of system-level coordination and planning of Ontario universities that has occurred has been significantly less than has been recommended in the post-war era.

Hence, the scope of this thesis is restricted primarily to recommendations and initiatives pertaining to structures for the coordination and planning of publicly assisted university-level education in Ontario and while sensitive to the context, does not undertake to analyse the complete contents of the reports in which they are found. While reports undertaken in Ontario constitute the majority of the documents reviewed, national reports which appeared to contribute to, or influence the debate in Ontario around system-level coordination and planning structures and process, are examined as well. Reports emanating from other provinces were not reviewed as they did not appear to have a significant impact on discussions in Ontario.

The scope of this thesis is also limited to an analysis of Ontario's university-level sector, which came to consist of the 17 universities and two university-level institutions that receive operating grants from the province of Ontario.¹ While mention is made of Ontario's system of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology (CAATs) which were established as crown agencies in 1965, this thesis does not purport to discuss coordination and planning issues specifically pertaining to that sector of postsecondary education, nor does it examine the role of the Council of Regents, the government's policy advisory agency and collective bargaining agent in the CAAT sector.

The period under examination begins in 1945 with the commencement of significant post-war enrolment demand for university education and ends with the recommendations contained in the December 1996 report of the Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education. While the potential for analysis of the latter report is restricted by its relatively recent appearance, the framework for university-government relations it advocated is noteworthy, in that it represents a distinct departure from an established pattern of recommendations encouraging government to enhance formal university system coordination and planning structures and processes.

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1. The universities include: Brock University and affiliate Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary; Carleton University; University of Guelph; Lakehead University; Laurentian University, its federates Huntington College, Thorneloe University and Université de Sudbury, and its affiliates Algoma College and Collège de Hearst; McMaster University and its affiliate McMaster Divinity College; Nipissing University; University of Ottawa and its federate Saint Paul University; Queen's University and its affiliate Queen's Theological College; Ryerson Polytechnic University; University of Toronto and its federates University of St. Michael's College, Trinity College, Victoria University and affiliate the Toronto School of Theology; Trent University; University of Waterloo and its affiliates Renison College, St. Paul's United College, St. Jerome's College and Conrad Grebel College; University of Western Ontario and its affiliates Brescia College, Huron College, King's College and St. Peter's Seminary; Wilfrid Laurier University and its federate Waterloo Lutheran Seminary; University of Windsor and its affiliates Assumption University, Canterbury College and Iona College; and York University and its bilingual campus, Glendon College. Related university-level institutions include the Ontario College of Art and Collège dominicain de philosophie et de théologie.

In addition, a detailed examination of academic program coordination and planning in the Ontario university sector is undertaken which focuses on the role of the Council of Ontario Universities, the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies and its Advisory Committee on Academic Planning, and the Ontario Council on University Affairs and its Academic Advisory Committee. While one could conceivably have selected other foci for in-depth examination, such as those of credit transferability or coordination of library resources, the coordination and planning of academic program development is arguably the primary object of university system coordination and planning efforts, and certainly in Ontario proved to be a fulcrum upon which a delicate balance between university autonomy and government intervention was established.

While recognizing that the university community is composed of a diverse set of constituencies composed along institutional and disciplinary lines as well as by groups representing students, faculty, staff and administrators, this study focuses on the relationship between Ontario university presidents, individually, as Chief Executive Officers of their institutions, and collectively in the context of the Council of Ontario Universities and its affiliated organizations, and the Ontario Ministry responsible for universities and its advisory body on university policy, namely the Ontario Council on University Affairs. This approach is adopted because it is in the context of the interplay of these actors that the debates and decisions around the issues pertaining to system coordination and planning in Ontario have primarily occurred.

In view of three recent and comprehensive pieces of research, one on the history and significance of the Ontario funding distribution mechanism in 1992, and two on the Ontario

Council on Graduate Studies' graduate program quality appraisal process undertaken respectively in 1991 and 1994, these issues will receive only cursory review in this thesis to avoid duplication.²

1.3 Methodology

This work chronicles the various recommendations pertaining to structures for university system coordination and planning in Ontario from 1945 to 1996, emanating from national and provincial initiatives using an historical approach. It documents the reactions of the government and the university community to these recommendations and identifies determinants of the degree of university system coordination and planning in Ontario. It examines how recommendations have changed over time and the environmental factors which affected perceptions of the need for coordination and planning. It examines the individuals and structures responsible for system-level coordination and planning. Efforts to introduce and undertake system-level coordination and planning are examined in particular detail with respect to academic program development. The key question to be answered is why has Ontario had such limited structures, policies and mechanisms for ensuring system-level coordination and planning among its publicly assisted universities, which receive the majority of their operating revenue from the public purse. In answering this question, the nature of the relationship between Ontario universities and the provincial government will be exposed, and

2. See J. Paul Stenton, *The Ontario University Operating Grants Formula: Its Development to 1986*, Unpublished Doctor of Education thesis, University of Toronto, 1992; Carolyn Filteau, *Evaluating the Evaluators: A Description of the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies Appraisals Process*, A project submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Public Administration in the Faculty of Graduate Studies, Queen's University, August 1, 1991; and Ellen Herbeson, *The Ontario Council on Graduate Studies Appraisals Process: A Case Study*, Unpublished Doctor of Philosophy thesis, University of Toronto, 1994.

the forces that have determined the degree to which government has influenced the behaviour of the province's publicly-assisted universities will be identified.

Certain insights and numerous documents which inform this research flow from the nature of the author's professional position. As a Senior Research Officer with the Ontario government's advisory body on matters of university policy, the Ontario Council on University Affairs (OCUA), from 1985 to 1996 when the Council was abolished, the author worked closely with members of OCUA and its Academic Advisory Committee (AAC). In addition, the author had responsibilities which provided opportunities to work closely with the Council of Ontario Universities (COU), the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies (OCGS), senior university administrators, senior analysts and executives within the Ontario ministry responsible for university matters, and bureaucrats in other provinces. Through the Ontario Council on University Affairs the author was directly or indirectly involved with a number of the system-level policies, instruments, mechanisms and initiatives under review, including the program funding approvals process, the Transition Assistance Program, program quality reviews, the University Restructuring Steering Committee, and the Resource Allocation Review. From July 1996 to December 1996, the author was a Senior Policy Advisor with the Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education.

Aspects of this thesis have been previously published in two government of Ontario documents: *University-Government Relations in Ontario 1945-1995: A Summary of Selected Initiatives and Recommendations Related to System Coordination and Planning*³ and (with

3. Written by the author and published in an unattributed fashion by the Ontario Council on University Affairs, under the title *University Government Relations in Ontario 1945-1995: A Summary of Selected Initiatives and Recommendations Related to System Coordination and Planning*, Toronto: The Council, March 1995.

David M. Cameron) “Prologue to Change: An Abbreviated History of Public Policy and Postsecondary Education in Ontario” in *Excellence, Accessibility, Responsibility: Report of the Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education*.⁴

Throughout her professional career in the postsecondary sector the author has also benefitted from her association with the Canadian Society for the Study of Higher Education, having served on the Executive of that organization, as Chair for Membership Services and as Secretary-Treasurer.

The information contained in this thesis is based on published research, public reports, government documents, ministry and OCUA archives, university documents and publications, unpublished academic papers, public addresses, minutes of various OCUA committees, Ministerial correspondence, author’s personal notes from public hearings held by the Ontario Council on University Affairs, meeting minutes of the Academic Advisory Committee, and conferences sponsored by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, the Canadian Society for the Study of Higher Education, the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies, the Canadian Association of University Teachers, the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada and the Ontario Economic Council.

Personal interviews were undertaken with fourteen individuals, deemed to be key informants, directly involved in the decisions and processes related to recommendations about system-level university coordination and planning in Ontario at various points in time during the period under examination. Interviews with these individuals were used to confirm the

4. David M. Cameron and Diana M. Royce, “Prologue to Change: An Abbreviated History of Public Policy and Postsecondary Education in Ontario”, Background Paper, Appendix B, in Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education, *Excellence, Accessibility, Responsibility: Report of the Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education*, Toronto: Queen’s Printer, December 1996.

independent research findings and to provide additional insights and detail. The individuals included a former Premier of Ontario (1), former Ministers responsible for university affairs (3), university presidents (3), chairs/executive directors/presidents of government or university agencies or advisory bodies (5), and senior provincial civil servants and senior staff from the university collectivity (5). A number of the individuals had held more than one of these types of key positions over their careers.

Individuals were selected on the basis of the breadth of their experience in relation to the events under study. Four interviews were brief and consisted of conversations to ascertain particular facts or opinions not otherwise available. Eight individuals were interviewed for a period ranging from forty-five minutes to one and a half hours in duration. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. Some individuals, still holding key positions in government or the university system requested that their comments be unattributed and this request has been respected. Two additional individuals were interviewed after they had reviewed specific chapters for accuracy and in one case key aspects of the discussion were recorded.

Interview questions were focused on the particular knowledge and experiences which each interviewee had to offer. There was some standardization of questions among interviewees. Where standard questions were asked, there was a very high degree of similarity among the responses provided.

1.4 The Research Context for University-Government Relations in Ontario

An historiographic approach is taken in this work, which is an approach to research on the broad development of Ontario higher education frequently adopted by scholars of Ontario higher education. Robin Harris's *History of Higher Education* represents one of the earliest

attempts to analyse systematically the development of Ontario's institutions of higher education. This work stands as a foundational, but rather dry, encyclopaedic history of the development of Ontario's universities. Harris's work provides an extensive inventory of the "where", "what" and "how much" of university structures and program development to the 1970s, but limited analysis is brought to bear on the broader factors contributing to why the universities of Ontario developed the way that they did or how the nature of university-government relations affected their development.

A more contextual and conceptual historical treatment of the early years of Ontario higher education would await the recent publication of *Matters of Mind* by A.B. McKillop in 1994. This scholarly work charts the historical transformation of the concept of the university from the late 1800s to the 1950s. In doing so, the relations between the universities and government over that period are woven intricately throughout the piece. The epilogue of this work, entitled "Towards the Educative Society" makes an explicit link easily recognizable by the student of higher education to the work of W.G. Fleming, who, in the 1970s, had taken up the historical needle and thread at the very point where McKillop leaves off.

W.G. Fleming's 1971 work, entitled *Post-secondary and Adult Education*, was one of a seven volume series of historical scholarship on education in Ontario entitled, *Ontario's Educative Society*. Fleming's research contributes a comprehensive, if largely descriptive look at the development of the Ontario universities and their relationship with the provincial government from the 1950s to the 1970s. Fleming delved into both the formal structural and the informal attitudinal aspects of university development and in this regard provides a very detailed descriptive study of the development of the university-government relationship in

Ontario, much of which is based on personal interviews, meeting notes and reports of committees, councils and commissions of that period. This approach provides a texture and complexity of analysis which complements and enhances Harris's foundational contribution to postsecondary research in Ontario over a similar period. Fleming's work concludes in 1970, coinciding with the initial work of the Commission on Post-Secondary Education in Ontario, chaired by Douglas Wright. As such, Fleming's contribution to the literature covers the critical period of university development in Ontario but not the ensuing period of consolidation. In the years following Fleming's publications, the Ontario government embarked on a regular, and still very much ongoing search for a new policy framework for postsecondary education. The doctoral dissertation of E.E. Stewart, a former Deputy Minister of Education and from 1972-73 Secretary to Cabinet during the William G. Davis era, contributes substantially to our understanding of policy development and university government relations in Ontario from 1791 to 1964.

The Ontario-specific literature is also rich with published public lectures and seminars bearing directly on the subject of university-government relations and perceptions of the need for greater coordination and planning by the likes of former Premier of Ontario, the Honourable William G. Davis, who presented his treatise on university-government relations, *Governments and the University*, at York University in the context of the 1966 Gerstein lectures; Kenneth Hare, former member of the Commission to Study the Development of Graduate Programmes in Ontario Universities ("the Spinks Commission") who gave the Allan B. Plaunt Lectures, *On University Freedom*, at Carleton University in 1967; a 1985 conference sponsored by the Ontario Economic Council following which the proceedings were published

as *Ontario Universities: Access, Operations and Funding*; and seminars in 1973, 1980 and 1987 sponsored by the Higher Education Group, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. The 1973 seminars resulted in seven papers published under the title *Agencies for Higher Education in Ontario*, which focused on the dynamic nature of the Ontario postsecondary sector to the early 1970s. The 1980 seminars, which focused specifically on government-university relations, were published under the title *Critical Issues Facing Ontario Universities*, featuring Percy Smith (“Academic Freedom and Institutional Autonomy”) and Robert O. Berdahl (“System-Wide Decision-Making: A View from Outside”). The 1987 seminar, which was by far the largest with 18 papers published, focused on the theme reflected in the title of the publication *Governments and Higher Education - The Legitimacy of Intervention*. To these one can add a number of collections of the speeches and reflections of such former Ontario university presidents as Claude T. Bissell⁵ and J.A. Corry,⁶ and such former university administrators as Robin Ross.⁷

Research projects undertaken by the Council of Ontario Universities also provide insights into the nature of university-government relations at various points in time. For example, in 1971, the Committee of Presidents of Universities of Ontario’s subcommittee on Research and Planning published its brief to the Commission on Post-Secondary Education in Ontario entitled *Towards 2000: The Future of Post-Secondary Education in Ontario*. This brief advocated greater integration and coordination between the colleges of applied arts and technology and the universities, a single Department of Post-Secondary Affairs and a single

5. C.T. Bissell, *The Strength of the University*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968.

6. J.A. Corry, *Farewell the Ivory Tower*, Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1970.

7. Robin Ross, *The Short Road Down: A University Changes*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984.

advisory body as a better way to meet provincial postsecondary needs.⁸

In 1982, Paul Axelrod published *Scholars and Dollars: Politics, Economics and the Universities of Ontario 1945-1980*. Axelrod relies on the historical record, not as an end in itself, but rather as fuel for his analysis of the relationship of universities to society within a contextual approach to a study of the political economy of higher education in Ontario and an analysis of the province's postsecondary political culture. This research follows in the tradition of the Marxist or neo-Marxist critique, and the ensuing analysis focuses heavily on the instrumental nature of the university-government relationship to state economic objectives.

When looking for a provincially-comparative context in which to situate this thesis, one finds a smaller body of related research, comparative and otherwise. Research projects undertaken by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada have from time to time contributed insights into the nature of university-government relations from a national perspective. For example, in 1974, a report to the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, entitled *Planning for Planning - Relationships between Universities and Governments: Guidelines to Process*, undertaken by Bernard Trotter and A.W.R. Carrothers, captured the strengths and weaknesses of structures for facilitating university-government relations throughout Canada in the early 1970s. This report also proposed roles and responsibilities for universities, the university collectivity, intermediary bodies, and governments to facilitate and coordinate short, medium and long-term planning.

In an analytical snap-shot of post-secondary education in Canada, Peter M. Leslie's report to the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC), *Canadian*

8. J. Porter, B. Blishen *et al* for the Committee of Presidents of Universities of Ontario, *Towards 2000: The Future of Post-Secondary Education in Ontario*, Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1971, p. 170.

Universities 1980 and Beyond, provides a pan-Canadian comparative look at universities, coordinating structures and policies as they relate to financing and excellence. Although some of the analysis, based as it was on the assumption of enrolment decline, is now dated, in view of the recent closure of the Ontario Council on University Affairs, Leslie's work was prophetic in observing that:

The arm's length relationship which the government sought to guarantee, first through formula financing and subsequently through establishing the Ontario Council on University Affairs as a buffer between the state and the universities, is an uncertain one. Political pressures...may make such a relationship difficult to sustain.⁹

Aspects of Leslie's analysis verge on advocacy of institutional autonomy. While recognizing the need for a provincial role in the development and structure of a university system in each province, Leslie advocated a permissive stance for provincial governments, *vis-à-vis* universities "that [would] support, not restrict, the development of the universities...and respect the importance of university autonomy regarding the internal disposition of funds and the development of academic programming."¹⁰

In 1982, William M. Sibley addressed a conference of 400 individuals broadly representative of the national education community, sponsored by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, on the subject of the role of the intermediary body in Canadian postsecondary education.¹¹ Sibley described in detail the nature, role and powers of various provincial intermediary bodies in place in Canadian provinces at that time - most of which no

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9. Peter M. Leslie, *Canadian Universities 1980 and Beyond: Enrolment, Structural Change and Finance*, Ottawa: Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, September 1980, pp. 90-91.
 10. *Ibid.*, pp. 372-373.
 11. W.M. Sibley, "The Role of Intermediary Bodies in Postsecondary Education", *Postsecondary Education Issues in the 1980's: Proceedings of the CMEC Conference on Postsecondary Education, Toronto, October 19-22, 1982*, Toronto: Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, 1983.

longer exist. Sibley, at that time with the Saskatchewan Universities Commission, provides a particularly insightful analysis of the factors determining the degree of influence that intermediary bodies have on government and the universities. He concludes that differences in the formal status and powers of the various provincial intermediaries are less significant in explaining their efficacy than the nature of the political and historical culture and the prevailing economic conditions in which they are operating.¹² Quoting Robert Berdahl, Sibley observes that an intermediary's relationship with the government and the universities can be described as one of "equal and opposite unpopularity"¹³ which is likely to worsen in "straitened economic circumstances,"¹⁴ perhaps explaining why a number of provinces subsequently abolished their intermediary structures. Sibley concludes that long-range planning, which he characterized as "the most general intractable problem which intermediaries...face"¹⁵ is made even more difficult due to the uncertainty inherent in anticipating future manpower needs, provincial economic circumstances and society's future needs.¹⁶ In an environment fraught with uncertainty, Sibley warns that intermediaries may forestall government intervention in matters of university development but they by no means can completely prevent it should government become convinced that universities are not taking the "hard but necessary decisions"¹⁷ needed to demonstrate responsible stewardship in the use of public funds.

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 147 and 149.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 149.

14. *Ibid.*

15. *Ibid.*, p. 156.

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 157-158.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 149.

Sibley's discussion of intermediary bodies struck two scholars of higher education in British Columbia as incomplete, provoking them, in 1985, to undertake a more detailed analysis of their own, focusing on the value of intermediary bodies to government and universities. The resulting comparison of government-university relations in Alberta (which had abolished its intermediary body in 1972), and British Columbia (which at that time had had an intermediary body since 1974), was undertaken by Lee Southern and John D. Dennison. Their findings suggested that while an intermediary body could potentially function as an instrument of rational system planning and coordination in the university sector independent of political motivation, in practice, political and fiscal factors were perceived to have had more impact on system governance and university-government relations than did the existence of an intermediary body or lack thereof.¹⁸

In addition to the scholarly literature about system coordination and planning in other Canadian jurisdictions, one finds a variety of provincially-focused reports, such as resulted from the 1961 Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education in Quebec, chaired by Msgr. Alphonse Parent, and the New Brunswick Royal Commission on Higher Education of 1961, chaired by John Deutsch of Queen's University in Kingston. The former recommended a greater role in central planning and coordination for a decentralized institutional delivery system, and the latter recommended greater institutional centralization.¹⁹ While each province has, at various points in time, undertaken a review of its postsecondary policy framework and its relationship with its universities, the debate around university-government relations and

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18. Lee Southern and John D. Dennison, "Government-University Relations: IMB or No IMB? A Comparative View of Alberta and British Columbia," *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. XV-2, 1985, p. 87.
19. See David M. Cameron, *More Than an Academic Question...*, *op cit.*, pp. 105-116 for an overview of these reports and two others undertaken in British Columbia and Prince Edward Island within the same time period.

system development in Ontario did not appear to be influenced by such reviews to a noticeable degree. Ontario policy makers and opinion leaders appeared more inclined over the years to look to developments in the United Kingdom and in American state university systems such as California and New York for inspiration. It was only during the 1990s, as a result of the Ontario Council on University Affairs' participation in a debate on system restructuring and a subsequent review of the allocation of public resources to the university sector, that university-government relations in Ontario were deliberately placed in a broader context that included recent developments in the United Kingdom, Australia and American state university systems as well as initiatives that were occurring in other Canadian provinces such as Alberta,²⁰ British Columbia,²¹ Manitoba,²² New Brunswick,²³ Nova Scotia,²⁴ and Saskatchewan.²⁵

With the 1991 publication of *More Than an Academic Question: Universities, Government and Public Policy in Canada*, David M. Cameron provided a unique and wide-ranging examination of the relationship between Canada's universities and the federal as well as provincial governments, focusing primarily on the period 1945 to 1990. Both historical and contextual in nature, Cameron's work is the first of its kind to review a wide range of national

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20. Alberta, Department of Advanced Education and Career Development. *New Directions for Adult Learning in Alberta*, October 1994.
 21. British Columbia, *Charting a New Course: A Strategic Plan for the Future of British Columbia's College, Institute, and Agency System*, Ministry of Education, Skills and Training, 1995.
 22. Manitoba, *Post-secondary Education in Manitoba: Doing Things Differently*, Report of the University Education Review Commission, December 1993.
 23. New Brunswick, *To Live and Learn: The Challenge of Education and Training*, Report of the Commission on Excellence in Education, January 1993.
 24. Nova Scotia Council on Higher Education, *Critical Choices: The Nova Scotia University System at a Crossroad*. Green Paper on Higher Education, October 1994.
 25. Saskatchewan, *Looking at Saskatchewan Universities: Programs, Governance, and Goals*, Report of the University Program Review Panel, March 1993.

and provincial commissions during that period, linking them to issues of national and provincial significance such as system-planning, institutional governance structures, unionization, and institutional management. This work provides contextual overview and analytical insight into the nature of the national - provincial interplay of issues affecting university development Canada-wide. By comparing and contrasting the development of Canada's provincially based university systems, Cameron's work provides a unique synthesis of the local and national nature of university-government relations across Canada.

Building on the foundation of Ontario and Canadian-based research to the 1980s, Glen A. Jones and Michael L. Skolnik have produced a great deal of the descriptive, analytical and policy-relevant research on the development of higher education in Ontario in recent years. Much of their latest scholarship touches directly or indirectly upon the development of relations between the universities and government and university coordination and planning. Both have noted that since the 1960s there have been a series of unheeded, although repeated calls for greater system coordination in Ontario.²⁶ Both have provided insights into the nature of university-government relations, noting the existence of a public monopoly over the granting of university degrees, explaining the high degree of uniformity across Canada with respect to institutional quality, function and fields of study as a response to the need to meet public expectations for equality of access to a widely dispersed population and to assuage regional political aspirations,²⁷ and arguing that provincial and institutional promotion of

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26. Michael L. Skolnik, "Diversity in Higher Education: The Canadian Case", November 1986, p. 19. (a slightly condensed version of this paper appeared in *Higher Education in Europe*, Vol. XI, No. 2, 1986), pp. 19-32, and Glen A. Jones, "Modest modifications and structural stability: higher education in Ontario," *Higher Education*, No. 21, 1991, p. 579.
27. Michael L. Skolnik, "Diversity in Higher Education...", *op cit.*, p. 17.

uniformity results from the sharing or imitating of best practices among jurisdictions as well as a desire for parity among institutions in terms of financing and treatment.²⁸ At the same time, their research has revealed significant programmatic diversity which they attribute to the institutions' high level of autonomy.

In the context of a review of postsecondary diversity in Canada, Skolnik has documented institutional and political resistance to institutional differentiation, a core tenet of system coordination, and identified a number of factors which, in his view, mitigated against deliberate university stratification:

Chief among these is that the most persuasive arguments for diversity are social and educational, not financial. Stratification would produce significant economies only if it were used to camouflage reductions in accessibility, and all three political parties have come out against reductions in accessibility. If the social and educational arguments fail to persuade, then the political arguments against stratification are likely to prevail.²⁹

While many jurisdictions internationally underwent significant structural change, Jones observes that it has been the practice in Ontario for government to pursue university-related policies that resist change, or pursue it in modest forms, within an overall policy of treating all institutions equally, as evidenced by a lack of a province-wide institutional classification systems and little legal differentiation of institutional powers.³⁰ Jones argues that the limited role played by the federal government in higher education policy, a phenomenon he terms "soft federalism," has also contributed to provincial university system stability.

In a 1992 study entitled "Governments, Governance, and Canadian Universities," Jones

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28. Glen A. Jones, "Diversity Within a Decentralized Higher Education System: The Case of Canada", *The Mockers and Mocked: Comparative Perspectives of Differentiation, Convergence and Diversity in Higher Education*, V.L. Meek et al (Eds.), Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1996, pp. 84-87.
29. Michael L. Skolnik, "Diversity in Higher Education..." *op. cit.*, p. 20.
30. Glen A. Jones, "Modest modifications and structural stability...." *op. cit.*, p. 579.

brings together what he views as the elements of a “Canadian” approach to the relationships between universities and governments: 1) soft federalism; 2) binary structure consisting of degree and non-degree sectors; 3) secular universities; 4) public monopoly over the authority to grant degrees; 5) limited competition among universities; 6) high level of institutional autonomy; 7) managerialism at the margins - most public funding is allocated to universities as an unconditional block of funds with coordination and planning in specific policy areas achieved through regulation, typically of new program funding, and targeted or strategic funding to stimulate particular activities; 8) exclusive sector policy networks typically dominated by the responsible government department, the intermediary body (where it exists) and representatives of university, faculty and student interests; 9) bicameralism and decentralized, participatory governance.³¹ While pointing to the existence of very important differences between provinces, Jones argues that “it is the combination of these nine factors which make the Canadian ‘approach’ unusual.”³²

In a series of research papers undertaken in the 1990s, Skolnik examined government-university relations from the perspective of accountability,³³ finance³⁴ and structures for coordination and planning (with Glen A. Jones).³⁵ A persistent theme throughout this research is the challenge to government-university relations posed by the high degree of institutional

31. Glen A. Jones, “Governments, Governance, and Canadian Universities” *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research*, J.C. Smart (Ed.), Vol. XI, New York: Agathon Press, 1996. pp. 361-366.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 365.

33. Michael L. Skolnik, “University Accountability in Ontario in the Nineties: Is There a Role for a Provincial Agency?,” *Ontario Journal of Higher Education*, Toronto: Higher Education Group, OISE, 1994.

34. Michael L. Skolnik, “Upsetting the Balance: The Debate on Proposals for Radically Altering the Relationship between Universities and Government in Ontario,” mimeograph, May 24, 1995.

35. Michael L. Skolnik and Glen A. Jones, “A Comparative Analysis of Arrangements for State Coordination of Higher Education in Canada and the United States,” *Journal of Higher Education*, vol. 63, No. 2, March/April 1992.

autonomy enjoyed by Ontario universities, which Skolnik argues is “perhaps the most striking feature of Ontario universities” when “viewed in an international context”.³⁶ In late 1996, just prior to the release of the most recent postsecondary policy review undertaken at the behest of the Ontario government, Skolnik argued that “drift” appears to be the strategy underpinning most postsecondary policy in Ontario, and that left to their own devices in a deregulated environment, without a conscious vision or plan of how the system could be most efficiently and effectively steered toward socially beneficial results, institutions become even more similar in terms of standards, functions and aspirations. Skolnik concludes that Ontario is currently “using an elitist model to deliver mass higher education”³⁷ and that the “financial difficulty, if not impossibility, of maintaining such an expensive university system model provides incentive to modify it.”³⁸ While recognizing that “there will always be a proper role for a good measure of drift in formulating higher education policy”³⁹ he suggests that there may be “a healthier balance to be obtained between drift and design.”⁴⁰

Building upon the work of Martin Trow, which analyzes the challenges faced by universities and governments in making the transition from elite to mass to universal accessibility to higher education, Bernard J. Shapiro, former Ontario Deputy Minister responsible for universities, former Council of Ontario Universities visiting scholar 1993-1994, and now Principal of McGill University, has contributed to the debate on how Ontario can best meet the challenges of mass accessibility in the context of constrained public

36. Michael L. Skolnik, “Upsetting the Balance...”, *op cit.*, p. 30.

37. Michael Skolnik, “Balancing Drift and Design: Ontario Universities Need Firmer Direction”, *The Bulletin*, University of Toronto, December 9, 1996, p. 12.

38. *Ibid.*

39. *Ibid.*

40. *Ibid.*

finances. Noting that demand for university access continues to increase based on the belief that the economic development of society is positively affected by such expansion and that university certification fosters upward social mobility, Shapiro argues that policies enhancing differentiation are essential to effective management of the “second-stage massification” which Ontario is experiencing. Arguing that stage-one massification, characterized by differentiation of institutional types, is eventually undermined by, among other things, mission overload and overlap, Shapiro suggests that stage two massification requires an emphasis on differentiation **not** between institutional types but **within** institutions.⁴¹ However, he notes that the ultimate challenge is how to manage the “post-mass” age when “there is no sign that the expansion of higher education is ending or that anyone is in control of the development.”⁴²

In the next section, research that extends beyond the provincial and Canadian context will be briefly reviewed.

1.5 The Broader Research Context

Within the domain of planning broadly construed, a substantial portion of the literature is devoted to the why’s and how’s of institutional planning of a strategic, financial and academic nature.⁴³ Of direct relevance to this thesis is the subset of the planning literature devoted to system coordination and planning.

41. Bernard J. Shapiro, “Mass Higher Education: Problems and Challenges”, unpublished, September 1993, p. 10. This work was subsequently reworked with the assistance of Harold T. Shapiro, President of Princeton University and published by the Council of Ontario Universities in 1994 under the title *Higher Education: Some Problems and Challenges in a Changing World*.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

43. For example, refer to the journal *Planning for Higher Education* published by The Society for College and University Planning, the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Scholarly research on system coordination and planning appears to be dominated by case studies of current practices in the United States where formal structures for coordination and planning are widespread, and the sharing of “best practices” research is encouraged. The study and analysis of higher education systems and the variety of arrangements and administrative mechanisms for funding, coordination and planning is emphasized. Within this body of literature, one finds conceptual research focusing on the university-government interface. The works of Eric Ashby,⁴⁴ Robert O. Berdahl⁴⁵, Burton Clark and Lyman Glenny⁴⁶ are representative of this vein of scholarly research. The more analytical, as opposed to what I would characterize as practical or applied research, is frequently situated in a comparative or case study context of American states or international jurisdictions. But, as mentioned at the outset, the bulk of the system-coordination and planning literature is concerned with the “how to” administrative arrangements facilitating state interaction with universities as typified by the work of D. Kent Halstead, *Statewide Planning in Higher Education*,⁴⁷ John D. Millett’s, *Conflict in Higher Education*⁴⁸, Aims C. McGuinness, Jr.’s *Recent State Higher Education Studies and Trends in Coordination and Governance*,⁴⁹ and his *State Postsecondary Education*

44. See Eric Ashby, *Universities: British, Indian, African*, Cambridge, Mass.:Harvard University Press, 1966.

45. See Robert O. Berdahl, *Statewide Coordination of Higher Education*, Washington: American Council on Higher Education, 1971.

46. See Lyman A. Glenny, *Autonomy of Public Colleges: The Challenge of Coordination*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959.

47. See Kent D. Halstead, *Statewide Planning in Higher Education*, Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974.

48. See John D. Millett, *Conflict in Higher Education: State Government Coordination Versus Institutional Independence*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1984.

49. See Aims C. McGuinness, Jr., *The Search for More Effective State Policy Leadership in Higher Education: Recent State Higher Education Studies and Trends in Coordination and Governance*, Denver: Education Commission of the States. 1986.

*Structures: Handbook, 1988.*⁵⁰ Scholarly journals in particular, abound with articles on the “how to” of approaches to state-wide coordination and planning. Prototypical examples of this genre of the literature are G. Eaton, J. Miyares, and R. Robertson’s article “Statewide Planning During Declining State Support”⁵¹; and L. Fisher’s article “State Legislatures and the Autonomy of Colleges and Universities.”⁵²

Generally speaking, much of the literature reflects a profoundly unquestioning acceptance of statewide coordination as a positive indicator of efficient and effective state policy-making processes, university performance and use of limited state resources. A review of the literature does, however, reveal critics of central coordination and control. A 1976 report of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching argued that centralization ultimately costs more and could not be shown to have improved policies and practices, except where “careful advance academic planning for higher education as a whole”⁵³ had been undertaken. Other concerns expressed in relation to centralized coordination and planning include loss of autonomy, increased bureaucratization, duplicative review processes, and reduced institutional efficiency and adaptability. H.D. Graham argues that consolidated governing boards tend to thwart competition and destroy institutional diversity.⁵⁴ It is noteworthy that much of this line of argument is generated by university faculty and

50. See Aims C. McGuinness Jr., *State Postsecondary Education Structures: Handbook, 1988*. Denver: Education Commission of the States, 1988.

51. Published in *Planning for Higher Education*, Vol. 23, Summer 1995, pp. 27-34.

52. Published in the *Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 59, No. 2, March/April 1988, pp. 133-162.

53. Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *The states and higher education: A proud past and a vital future*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1976, p. 11. Quoted in James C. Hearn and Carolyn P. Griswold, “State-Level Centralization and Policy Innovation in U.S. Postsecondary Education” *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, Summer 1994, Vol. 16, No. 2, p. 162.

54. H.D. Graham, “We don’t need superboards: It’s competition that has made U.S. higher education great”, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, November 4, 1987, p. A60. Quoted in James C. Hearn and Carolyn P., *op cit.*, p. 184.

administrators. Not surprisingly, therefore, J. Fredericks Volkwein's research revealed that notwithstanding a number of detractors from state controls, the "literature on this topic does not include a great deal of analytical data...and most literature on the topic is based on informed opinion rather than research"⁵⁵ J. Fredericks Volkwein's own empirical research in the area of state financial control found that although there was "little evidence that freedom from the burdens of state control encourages individual campuses to reduce administrative overhead" there was evidence which suggested that "[u]niversities which are less tightly controlled by their state governments also tend to be less dependent upon state appropriations" and that institutions demonstrated more effective cost management under conditions of deregulation.⁵⁶ In addition, he found that "Those campuses which are encumbered by elaborate fiscal and personnel controls by their state officials are less likely to develop alternative sources of revenue, or do so less effectively."⁵⁷

The work of J.C. Hearn and C.P. Griswold, "State-Level Centralization and Policy Innovation in U.S. Postsecondary Education,"⁵⁸ represents a small body of empirically-based assessments of the merits of the trend toward greater statewide coordination in its various forms in the United States. Their research, which tests the relationship between policy innovation and degree of centralization among states with state agencies of governance or coordination, revealed that both consolidated governing boards and statewide coordinating

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55. J. Fredericks Volkwein, "State Financial Control of Public Universities and its Relationship to Campus Administrative Elaborateness and Cost: Results of a National Study", *The Review of Higher Education*, 1986, Vol. 9 No. 3, p. 268.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 283.
57. *Ibid.*
58. Published in the journal *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, Summer 1994, Vol 16, No. 2, pp. 161-190.

boards were positively associated with academic innovation and that there was no evidence that the nature of the structures themselves made any material difference in the degree of innovation observed. They also found that governance arrangements “showed no relationship with innovations in financing postsecondary attendance.”⁵⁹ This type of research is beginning to provide an empirically-based component to the literature.

In conclusion, it is not altogether surprising that much of the research on system coordination and planning is impressionistic rather than empirical in nature, since the comparative and case study genre is not generated solely by professional academics. Public policy practitioners provide a useful service to their fellow practitioners in other jurisdictions by sharing their state-specific experiences. Much of this type of research assumes that system coordination and planning provides optimal outcomes for the state, so such research focuses on the refinement of structures, policies and regulations to maximize the effective use of state resources and achievement of state objectives.

There is a body of non-North American international literature pertaining to university system coordination and planning and university-state relations, that is both jurisdictionally specific and comparative. Although some research concerning developments in the United Kingdom and Australia are referenced in the ensuing text, this body of literature, while illuminating in a comparative context, is less relevant to the research at hand, and therefore, is not reviewed here.

59. *Ibid.*, p. 183.

1.6 The Contribution of this Research to the Literature

This research marks the first attempt to chronicle and explain the history of system-level coordination and planning of Ontario universities from 1945 through 1996 by analyzing the development of and response to the recommendations of commissions, reports and task forces. It is also the first attempt to examine the role of the Academic Advisory Committee of the Ontario Council on University Affairs in academic program coordination and planning as well as this Committee's relationship to the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies. Its findings will be of particular interest to public policy makers and observers in Ontario and other Canadian jurisdictions contemplating system-level coordination and planning initiatives in the university sector. It provides an Ontario case study on which to base future research undertaken in a national and international, comparative context. It also provides a foundation for a series of detailed case studies of specific coordination and planning initiatives, including those related to credit transferability, French language academic programming, and research policy.

Chapter 2: The Nature of University-Government Relations

2.1 The Importance of Universities to Ontario Society

An act of incorporation exists for each Ontario university, which provides legislative authorization for them to grant, in most cases, any and all degrees.⁶⁰ University acts typically set out the institutions as private corporations, identify the objects of the university, powers of the university, composition of the Board of Governors and its role and powers, composition and role of Senate, role and powers of the Chancellor, President, and Vice-Chancellor, and identify the financial and other reporting requirements of the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

Universities consider their primary functions to be teaching, research and community service. Within the individual acts of the Ontario legislature that legally charter each university, these roles are typically described as the pursuit of learning through scholarship, teaching and research within a spirit of free enquiry and expression, the advancement of learning and dissemination of knowledge, the intellectual, spiritual, moral, social and physical development of the university's members and students, and the betterment of society.

In addition, the acts of some universities, such as that of the University of Ottawa, specify a unique mandate for the institution: e.g. "To further bilingualism and biculturalism and to preserve and develop French culture in Ontario." Other institutions have developed institutional mission statements that reflect a particular institutional orientation distinguishing them from other universities. For example, Lakehead University has adopted a regional

60. Only Ontario's two most recently created universities, Nipissing University and Ryerson Polytechnic University, have restricted degree granting authority. Nipissing University may grant "any and all baccalaureate degrees, any and all honorary degrees and the Masters of Education Degree." Ryerson Polytechnic University may grant "bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, doctoral degrees and honorary degrees consistent with the University's objects." The *Act* restricts Ryerson University's objects to: "The advancement of applied knowledge and research in response to existing and emerging societal needs...; and [t]he provision of programs of study that provide a balance between theory and application and that prepare students for careers in professional and quasi-professional fields."

mandate that it be “a university **in and for the North.**” [emphasis provided]⁶¹ This mandate is reflected in its program offerings and research programs such as those related to the pulp and paper industry and native affairs.

Within the Ontario university sector, academic program mix often reflects particular roles that have been reinforced by historic program strengths or mandates and by provincial legislation and funding policies which emphasize the prevention of program duplication. For example, the University of Guelph has a particular mandate arising from its unique agricultural and veterinary program offerings - a legacy of its parent institutions, the Ontario Agricultural College and Experimental Farm, and the Ontario Veterinary College.

Financial incentives within the provincial operating grant system have also influenced institutional role. Since 1981-82, Trent University has voluntarily opted to focus on program offerings at the undergraduate level in Arts and Science, divesting itself of single-discipline graduate programs. In recognition of the additional costs this role differentiation entails, Trent University receives an annual grant from the Ministry of Education and Training totalling \$1.346 million in 1996.

While one can point to differentiated institutional roles within the Ontario university sector, it is critical to note that the Ontario universities' roles and missions, as distinct from their range of programs, **are largely self-defined.** Relative to other publicly funded university sectors of comparable size and public cost, Ontario universities are highly autonomous.

Universities are recognized as institutions that play an important role in the economic, social, technological and cultural development of the province and the country. For this reason

61. Letter from Connie H. Nelson, Director, Research and Graduate Studies, Lakehead University to Dr. H.V. Nelles, Ontario Council on University Affairs, April 9, 1990, p. 1.

they are funded to a significant degree from the public purse. In 1995-96, the government of Ontario provided \$1.5 billion in public assistance to university-level institutions in the province. This funding constitutes on average 70% of the sector's operating income.

The perceived importance of universities to provincial prosperity was recognized in Ontario at the turn of the twentieth century as illustrated by a passage from the 1906 Ontario Royal Commission on the University of Toronto, wherein it was stated:

a liberal policy in dealing with higher education is dictated by sound statesmanship and an intelligent outlook. The modern conception of university training imposes new and serious burdens, but these burdens are cheerfully assumed in every progressive country. It is felt that both intellectual and material advancement are intimately associated with the most thorough and complete instruction, especially in a new and growing community. If we are to heed the lessons of the past, neglect of these necessary measures would certainly entail a lower standard of national efficiency.⁶²

Following World War I, education, provided by the State if necessary, was deemed essential for future prosperity. The 1920, Ontario Royal Commission on University Finances, underscored the State's responsibility for educational accessibility:

Education is not only intimately bound up with social and industrial reconstruction, but, in a deep sense, is the most important and enduring side of post-war policy. Upon the extent to which a country develops and uses the innate abilities of its citizens, its future, prosperity and permanence depend. The value of education to the nation has been realized afresh in these later days. This value is so great that it is the obligation of the State to provide full educational facilities for all its people. Only so can the healthy existence and continued progress of the State be maintained.⁶³

It was argued that the benefits of investing in education would accrue in terms of national prosperity:

62. *Ontario Royal Commission Re: The University of Toronto*, Toronto: Warwick Bro's & Rutter, 1906, p. x.

63. *Report of Royal Commission on University Finances, Vol. 1*, Toronto: Clarkson W. James, King's Printer, 1921, p. 4.

Education, applied to industry, commerce and the development of the natural resources of the country, promotes industrial efficiency, commercial growth and the increase of material wealth. ... National wealth and industry are directly related to education and must become more and more dependent upon it as civilization advances.⁶⁴

Acceptance of state financing of public education in Ontario was firmly rooted in the view that access to education was a public good and in the public interest.

Ontario's ongoing recognition of the importance of universities was most recently documented in 1996 by the Advisory Panel on Postsecondary Education, which stated:

Throughout the history of postsecondary education in Ontario, the importance of higher education to the development of society and to economic prosperity has been recognized. Today, in the midst of global economic, social and political change, a strong and vibrant postsecondary education sector is more important than ever. In this so-called information age, support for knowledge generation in our society, preparation of knowledge workers for our economy, and support for lifelong learning and innovative research in our institutions are key to our collective future.⁶⁵

Public recognition of the importance of universities to Ontario society is an issue on which there is broad political consensus of long standing. At the same time, following the second World War, when governments began to finance universities on a large scale, concerns developed around the ways in which higher education policy could provide for the desired degree of institutional and programmatic expansion, and ensure sound institutional management and expenditure of public funds. Publicly financed expansion of the number and scope of universities led to an increasing role for government in university affairs and there have been continued calls for the development of policies and structures promoting coordinated and planned developments among Ontario universities. Both increased collective

64. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

65. Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education, *Excellence, Accessibility, Responsibility*, Toronto: Queen's Printer, December 1996, p. 17.

autonomy and increased government regulation have been advocated over the years. Intermediary, “buffer” agencies evolved and various policies and mechanisms were put in place. Yet, reductions to institutional autonomy implicit in both approaches have been largely resisted and consecutive governments have repeatedly resorted to attempting to influence university behaviour through financial incentives and disincentives. While the balance between central coordination and institutional autonomy struck in the 1960s era of institutional expansion has not changed significantly, the Ontario government and the provincially assisted universities appear to have been engaged in an ongoing search for higher education structures and policies that would strike a different balance between government direction and institutional discretion in the publicly financed development of an Ontario university system.

2.2 The Nature of University Autonomy

University autonomy is usually defined as the power of universities to govern themselves without external controls. It is frequently regarded as a precondition of vigorous universities and essential in a democratic society. The literature suggests that university autonomy exists because society believes that it benefits from it. As Hare argued:

Academic freedom is part of the general freedom of liberal democratic societies...The proof that academic freedom is a desirable end is empirical. The best universities - those that pursue and spread their learning most effectively - seem to be those that govern themselves...the practical case for freedom is that free universities are better than servile universities, and hence they serve the public interest.⁶⁶

The autonomous ideal has roots in the mediaeval universities’ teaching guilds. Guild

66. Kenneth Hare, *On University Freedom in the Canadian Context*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968, pp. 9-10.

members placed a high value on intellectual freedom, protecting it as best they could by practising self-governance within the guild and obtaining exemptions from strictures of state and church. The North American definition of university autonomy, which was heavily influenced by the example of the nineteenth century German university's emphasis on the research functions of the university and the resultant need for *Lehrfreiheit* (a narrow form of academic freedom), is usually attributed to Justice Felix Frankfurter of the U.S. Supreme Court who cast university autonomy in terms of "the four essential freedoms of a university - to determine for itself on academic grounds who may teach, what may be taught, how it should be taught and who may be admitted to study."⁶⁷

In the Canadian context, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada have described the powers and duties associated with university autonomy as follows:

to select and appoint faculty and staff; to select and admit and discipline students; to set and control curriculum; to establish organizational arrangements for the carrying out of academic work; to create programs and to direct resources to them; to certify completion of a program of study and grant degrees.⁶⁸

Some scholars, such as Eric Ashby, have specifically cited the ability to undertake internal financial management unfettered by external control as an additional characteristic of autonomous universities. His description of university autonomy is three-fold:

1. The freedom to select staff and students and to determine the conditions under which they remain in the university;
2. The freedom to determine curriculum content and degree standards; and

67. Ontario Council on University Affairs, Task Force on Resource Allocation, *Some Perspectives on Academic Freedom, Autonomy and Accountability*, Toronto: The Council, March 1995, p. 11.

68. Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, *Statement on Academic Freedom and Institutional Autonomy*, Ottawa: AUCC, p. 3.

3. The freedom to allocate available funds across categories of expenditures.⁶⁹

Former Ontario university president, Claude T. Bissell also subscribed to a view of institutional autonomy that explicitly included unfettered internal fiscal management flexibility:

I would suggest that there are three basic freedoms: the freedom to determine who shall be taught, the freedom to determine what shall be taught, and the freedom to determine who shall teach. I shall add a fourth, although it is implied in the first three: the freedom to distribute its financial resources as it sees fit. I am not suggesting that these are absolute freedoms, in the sense that the universities should refuse to discuss any of these matters with outside bodies. I am simply saying that the university must never abdicate its right to make the final decisions in any of these areas. For abdication in one means abdication in all.⁷⁰

Why should universities, particularly universities that are almost entirely publicly funded, be entitled to such a significant amount of autonomy? The answer lies in the need for intellectual freedom within the university in order for it to fulfill its fundamental functions related to the search for new knowledge and its subsequent transmission to future generations. Academic freedom enables university faculty to search out new knowledge regardless of how unique or controversial, and to transmit this knowledge without fear of reprisal from academic, political, ecclesiastic or governmental authorities.

Cowan notes that the concepts of academic freedom in Canada owe much to the watershed joint AAUP/AAC declaration of 1940 in the United States which set out “the four pillars of academic freedom” as follows:

1. The right to teach without adherence to any prescribed doctrine (provided that one dealt with the subject matter in the Senate-approved course outline);

69. Eric Ashby, *Universities: British, Indian, American*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966, p. 321. Quoted in Robert Berdahl, *Statewide Coordination of Higher Education*, Washington: American Council on Higher Education, 1971, p. 9.

70. C.T. Bissell, *The Strength of the University*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964, p. 236.

2. The right to research without reference to prescribed doctrine;
3. The right to publish the results of one's research, and;
4. The right to speak extramurally, which includes the right to criticize the government of the day or the administration of one's institution.⁷¹

British scholars have also contributed to the Canadian understanding of academic freedom. Sir Keith Murray described the nature of the freedom that universities claimed to be fundamental to their success as "freedom of thought." This, he argues, requires three ancillary freedoms:

The first of these is freedom to make their own appointments to teaching posts, since otherwise political orthodoxy might become a condition of academic advancement and the pursuit of truth might be distorted. The second is freedom from external control over what is taught, which means freedom from interference in teaching, examinations and the award of degrees. The third is freedom from external control over admissions, so that the universities can select those most capable of benefit from their courses, without regard to creed or colour.⁷²

The Canadian Association of University Teachers' (CAUT) statement on academic freedom declares:

The common good of society depends upon the search for knowledge and its free exposition. Academic freedom in universities is essential to both these purposes in the teaching function of the university as well as in its scholarship and research. Academic staff shall not be hindered or impeded in any way by the university or the faculty association from exercising their legal rights as citizens, nor shall they suffer any penalties because of the exercise of such legal rights. ...Academic members of the community are entitled, regardless of prescribed doctrine, to freedom in carrying out research and publishing the results thereof, freedom of teaching and of discussion, freedom to criticize the university and the faculty association, and freedom from institutional censorship. Academic freedom does not require neutrality on the part of the individual. Rather, academic freedom makes commitment possible.

71. John Scott Cowan, *Lessons from the Fabrikant File: A Report to the Board of Governors of Concordia University*, May 1994, p. 6.

72. Quoted in Committee of Presidents of Provincially Assisted Universities, *Post-Secondary Education in Ontario 1962-1970: Report of the Presidents of the Universities of Ontario to the Advisory Committee on University Affairs*, May 1962, Revised January, 1963, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963, pp. 25-26.

Academic freedom carries with it the duty to use that freedom in a manner consistent with the scholarly obligation to base research and teaching on an honest search for knowledge.⁷³

While James Perkins concluded that “autonomy for the university surely has its strongest case in its role as protector of intellectual freedom,”⁷⁴ much of the literature appears to conflate the concepts of academic freedom and institutional autonomy. The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada has characterized institutional autonomy as academic freedom in its “collective form”.⁷⁵ Others, such as Ken Hare, have argued that university autonomy was a form of academic freedom, asserting: “Academic freedom has two aspects, related but distinct. There is the freedom claimed by the individual scholar. And there is the autonomy of the university to which he belongs.”⁷⁶

On the assumption that academic freedom is absolutely central to the ability of a university to carry out its fundamental missions of teaching and research, while management flexibility, the other aspect of institutional autonomy is not, some scholars have endeavoured to distinguish the notions of institutional autonomy and academic freedom. As noted by the Ontario Council on University Affairs:

Those who argue the importance of the distinction between academic freedom and autonomy do so in the belief that it will help in the defence of academic freedom, the more important of the two concepts for universities in the fulfilment of their mission.⁷⁷

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73. The Canadian Association of University Teachers, May 1977, quoted in The Ontario Council on University Affairs, *Sustaining Quality in Changing Times: Funding Ontario Universities - A Discussion Paper*, August 1994 (Newspaper version), p. 6, in footnote 8.
74. James A. Perkins, *The University in Transition*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1966, p. 14 quoted in Robert O. Berdahl, *Statewide Coordination of Higher Education*, Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1971, p. 8.
75. Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, “Statement on Academic Freedom and Institutional Autonomy”, 1988, mimeograph.
76. Kenneth Hare, *On University Freedom in the Canadian Context*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968, p. 11.
77. Ontario Council on University Affairs, Task Force on Resource Allocation, *Some Perspectives on Academic Freedom, Autonomy and Accountability, Background Paper*, Toronto: The Council, March 1995, p. 9.

Berdahl, in particular, argues:

the cause of academic freedom will be strengthened if it is disengaged somewhat from the question of university autonomy. Academic freedom must be firmly defended wherever and however it is threatened; but institutional autonomy has necessarily and legitimately been reduced by state actions...⁷⁸

The comparative research undertaken by Ashby of British, Indian and American universities has been particularly important in demonstrating that patterns of institutional autonomy and academic freedom vary significantly across jurisdictions. Ashby concludes:

There is a very strong case for asserting that [academic freedom] cannot vary with latitude, race, politics, or creed. ... By contrast university autonomy does not always and everywhere assume the same pattern.⁷⁹

While Berdahl observed “autonomy is related to academic freedom in that the latter is more likely to flourish in the autonomous institution,”⁸⁰ the research of Ashby demonstrated that the connection was not a necessary one. Ashby’s research demonstrated that:

...academic freedom as a concept is universal and absolute, whereas autonomy is of necessity parochial and relative, with the specific powers of governments and universities varying not only from place to place but also from time to time...emphasiz[ing] the urgency of keeping its definition relevant to changing conditions.⁸¹

Berdahl continues:

The real issue with respect to autonomy...is not whether there will be interference by the state but rather whether the inevitable interference will be confined to the proper topics and expressed through a suitably sensitive mechanism.⁸²

78. Robert O. Berdahl, *Statewide Coordination...*, *op cit.*, pp. 7-8.

79. Eric Ashby, *Universities: British, Indian African*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966, p. 321 quoted in Robert O. Berdahl, *Statewide Coordination of Higher Education*, Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1971, p. 8.

80. Robert Berdahl, *Statewide Coordination...*, *op cit.*, p. 8.

81. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

82. *Ibid.*

The literature suggests that notions vary about what the “proper topics” are, and reveals that what is considered legitimate government intervention varies among jurisdictions. For example, some jurisdictions, such as New York State have a state university system governed by The Regents of the University of the State of New York, which imposes significant bureaucratic controls on its universities related to admissions, budgets, programs and institutional mission. As Dressel notes:

...there have been many private institutions which were autonomous, but which did not extend academic freedom to the faculty and permitted little autonomy to individuals or sub-units within the institution... By contrast, though state co-ordinating agencies, offices of state government, and unified system boards have increasingly compromised the autonomy of institutions in recent years, in no situation has this invasion of autonomy been also an actual limitation on academic freedom.⁸³

One could conclude from the literature that government intrusion into what is considered strictly academic matters is an unacceptable violation of university autonomy while reductions in management flexibility are common and in many jurisdictions, acceptable.

As Hurtubise and Rowat observed, an extended definition of academic freedom often masks university resistance to legitimate government involvement in publicly funded universities:

If the confusion between autonomy and [academic] freedom is great, the confusion between autonomy as a necessary tool for protecting academic freedom and as a convenient excuse for opposing outside control of any kind is even greater. The problem here is that universities often claim autonomy in order to protect areas that are not essential to academic freedom and should not be protected. Thus universities should not claim autonomy for areas that are of vital interest to the state and society. Though many of these areas are of great academic significance, most of them are not directly related to the exercise of academic freedom.⁸⁴

83. Paul Dressel, "The Autonomy of Public Colleges," *New Directions for Institutional Research*, Number 26, 1980, p. 4.

84. René Hurtubise, and Donald C. Rowat, *The University, Society and Government: The Report of the Commission on the Relations Between Universities and Governments*, Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1970, p. 70.

A number of scholars have attempted to isolate the essential nature of academic freedom from other freedoms claimed by universities so as to better protect universities from external criticism of institutional autonomy generally. To emphasize the dual nature of autonomy, Hurtubise and Rowat proposed the following definition:

...the areas claimed for autonomous decision making by universities should be divided into two categories. One covers those areas that are essential to academic freedom, and the other covers those areas that prudentially should belong to universities... The first may be called areas of "essential autonomy" while for the second we have devised the term "prudential autonomy".⁸⁵

For similar reasons, Berdahl also concluded that certain kinds of autonomy may be necessary conditions for academic excellence and for safeguarding the public interest while others are not essential. Further to this point, Berdahl asserts that:

...a major source of current friction is that many academics are trying to protect too much, and many persons in state government are trying to claim too much. A fundamental cause of this confusion is the failure of persons on both sides to recognize that academic freedom and university autonomy, though related, are not synonymous and that university-state relations in the one area may quite properly differ from those in the other."⁸⁶

Berdahl's contribution to differentiating between autonomy related to academic freedom and autonomy related to management flexibility has taken form in his notions of substantive and procedural autonomy:

Substantive autonomy is the power of the university or college in its corporate form to determine its own goals and programmes - if you will, the what of academe. Procedural autonomy is the power of the university or college in its corporate form to determine the means by which its goals and programmes will be pursued - the how of academe.⁸⁷

85. *Ibid.*, p. 75.

86. Robert Berdahl, *Statewide Coordination...*, *op cit.*, p. 5.

87. Robert Berdahl, "Academic Freedom, Autonomy and Accountability in British Universities", *Studies in Higher Education*, Volume 15, No. 2, 1990, p. 172.

In view of these distinctions, Berdahl advocates an approach to state-university relations based on the following parameters:

First, ...government in general ought to stay out of any issues which threaten to lessen the vital academic freedom of persons undertaking teaching and research at universities and colleges. Secondly, ...governmental procedural controls are probably counter-productive and certainly irritating, but do not justify the same shrill note of academic outrage which might be voiced at threats of academic freedom. Finally, in the crucial domain of substantive autonomy, the state and the universities must somehow form a constructive partnership in which, while *force majeure* obviously lies with the state, there are sensitive mechanisms for bringing together state concerns with accountability and academic concerns with autonomy.⁸⁸

2.3 Accountability

What is meant by accountability? The Canadian Association of University Teachers observed that one of the many types of accountability includes “the... role of the state *vis-à-vis* higher education, ... to ensure that the large sums of public money involved in the running of the universities and colleges are wisely spent.”⁸⁹ That accountability involves an assessment of the relationship between outcomes and resource utilization is reflected clearly in the definition adopted by the Education Commission of the States which defines accountability as:

a concept and process that involves setting goals for higher education, measuring progress in relation to those goals and reporting to the people of the state, through the responsible state agencies, the degree of attainment of educational objectives.⁹⁰

Government expects certain results from its investment in higher education. Fleming

88. *Ibid.*, p. 173.

89. Canadian Association of University Teachers, Independent Study Group on University Governance, *Governance & Accountability*, January 1993, p. 53.

90. Education Commission of the States, *Challenge: Coordination and Governance in the '80s*. Denver, Colorado: The Commission, 1980, p. 38. Quoted in G. Grant Clark, “University Programme Review: A North American Perspective”, Unpublished paper prepared for the conference “Financing Canadian Universities: For Whom and by Whom” sponsored by the Canadian Association of University Teachers and the Institute for Policy Analysis, University of Toronto, March 3, 1981, Toronto, p. 21.

recognizes this point in his assessment of the nature of public accountability. Fleming states:

Government support necessarily has some kind of strings attached to it. The political system demands that there be a public accounting for all expenditures by public agencies. Thus there must be a means of ensuring that funds turned over to the universities are spent not only efficiently, but also in accordance with purposes that the public regards as worthy of support.⁹¹

The complexity of the concept of accountability in the Ontario university context stems from the legally autonomous status of Ontario universities vis-à-vis government. From a practical viewpoint, former Ontario university president, Harry Arthurs observes:

Autonomy and accountability are the diversionary opening bids in a Faustian negotiation. Accountability is the most innocuous concession that government can afford to ask of autonomous institutions, if it wishes to assure that public funds are being spent in accordance with public priorities; it is also the most ingratiating gesture autonomous institutions can afford to make, if they wish to forestall state intervention.⁹²

Recent research suggests that developments in university-government relations in Canada appear to be following the trend towards greater government influence over universities that characterizes Anglo-Saxon systems of higher education.⁹³ In large part this is a reflection of a growing perception in society and government that universities are too autonomous and not sufficiently responsive to changes in the fiscal, social and political environment. Ontario's former Deputy Minister of Education and Colleges and Universities, Bernard Shapiro, recently noted:

What I am referring to by accountability in a mass system of higher education is twofold: cost effectiveness and productivity on the one hand, and, on the other hand,

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91. W.G. Fleming, *Ontario's Educative Society IV: Post-secondary and adult education*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971, p. 22.
 92. H.W. Arthurs, "How do I Love Thee?: A Short Essay on University Accountability", Remarks to the Queen's University Council, May 5, 1994, p. 5.
 93. Peter J. George, and James A. McAllister, *The Expanding Role of the State in Canadian Universities: Can University Autonomy and Accountability be Reconciled?*, Discussion Series Issue 3, Toronto: Council of Ontario Universities, September 1994, p. 1.

responsiveness. Of these two, I believe that the latter, responsiveness, is fundamentally what the chief patron of higher education, the state, has in mind.⁹⁴

Shapiro adds that the universities have not demonstrated much responsiveness to “the voiced concerns of students, parents, taxpayers and others regarding access, costs, quality and value on both the teaching and research side”. Shapiro observed:

In general, the response of higher education to these concerns thus far has been some combination of (i) denial that any problem exists, (ii) projection - the problem really lies elsewhere - and/or (iii) paranoia (we are the objects of a witch hunt) or, beyond these, even a hostility to the communities that support us.”

He concluded:

This refusal to deal with the concerns of others - ...an implicit unwillingness to admit to the need to change in some way that would be relevant to the dramatic changes in the world around us - is either a denial of our own history...and/or an indulgence inappropriate in a democratic environment for a social enterprise of such substantial proportions.⁹⁵

At a minimum, the requirement to demonstrate responsible actions should not be incompatible with autonomy. Bernard Trotter *et al.* argues that the two concepts of autonomy and accountability are interdependent:

...accountability depends upon delegation. Where there has not been delegation of authority and responsibility there is no place for accountability. The university has, in our view, been delegated certain responsibilities and asked to perform certain functions by society. Unless it is free to a considerable degree to choose the way in which it performs these functions it cannot be held accountable for its performance. Thus the possibility of accountability depends directly upon the degree of autonomy.⁹⁶

It is clearly important to get the balance right between autonomy and accountability. As

94. Bernard J. Shapiro, “Mass Higher Education: Problems and Challenges”, unpublished, September 1993, p. 21. This work was subsequently reworked with the assistance of Harold T. Shapiro, President of Princeton University and published by the Council of Ontario Universities in 1994 under the title *Higher Education: Some Problems and Challenges in a Changing World*.

95. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

96. Bernard Trotter *et al.* *Planning for Planning*, Ottawa: Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, 1974, p. 75.

Berdahl warns: "Too much autonomy might lead to universities unresponsive to society; too much accountability might destroy the necessary academic ethos".⁹⁷

In Ontario, the balance is heavily tipped in favour of university autonomy. By virtue of their incorporating acts, Ontario universities are established as legally autonomous institutions. Their acts generally establish the governing board or council as the corporate or legal entity that is the university and specify the composition, roles, responsibilities and methods of operation of the board where fiduciary responsibility for the university lies. In bicameral governing structures academic responsibility rests with university senates. In the context of unicameral governance structures, academic and fiscal/management responsibilities are combined.

University boards are typically composed of a majority of external members which the board itself selects, together with alumni, municipal appointees, and appointees of federated and affiliated institutions as the case may be. Boards also have members representing faculty, students, and staff. Most, but not all, have external "provincial" members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council (LGIC).⁹⁸ The President, and often the Chancellor, are also members of the board.⁹⁹ While Ontario universities are legally autonomous from government they are considered "public" universities in that they they accept a significant degree of public funding.

Neither the individual incorporating acts of the institutions, nor the *Ministry of Colleges*

97. Robert O. Berdahl, "Academic Freedom, Autonomy and Accountability in British Universities," *op cit.*, p. 171.

98. Brock, Carleton, Trent and York Universities do not have board members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

99. Lakehead, Laurentian, Ottawa and Windsor universities do not include the Chancellor in their Board membership.

and Universities Act specify an accountability relationship between the government and the universities, although individual university acts generally specify that the board is to submit an annual financial statement to the Minister responsible for universities or to the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

A variety of unrelated accountability mechanisms have been developed by government over the years, the majority of which are institutionally-centered, initiative or policy specific and tied to the receipt of provincial operating and capital grants. Financial and enrolment reporting requirements and policies pertaining to operating grants, tuition and ancillary fees are outlined annually in the *Ontario Operating Funds Distribution Manual*.¹⁰⁰ Specific reporting requirements are normally associated with strategic or targeted funding initiatives. Mechanisms for determining program funding eligibility have evolved through cooperative efforts between universities and government, though government's control over the funding of new university programs exerts a powerful influence on institutional decisions regarding additional program offerings. Authority over which programs receive public support rests entirely with government, while primary responsibility for academic quality rests entirely with the institutions, individually and collectively. The government currently receives the results of graduate program quality reviews and monitors the review process. At the undergraduate level, government defers to institutional Senate assessments on program quality and no state monitoring process is in place.¹⁰¹ Current quality accountability mechanisms, therefore, pertain only to graduate and professional programs. To mid-1996, accountability for graduate program

100. See *The Ontario Operating Funds Distribution Manual*, an annual publication of the Ontario Ministry responsible for universities.

101. The Council of Ontario Universities has only recently begun to conduct system-wide undergraduate program quality audits. No results are yet available.

quality was part of the mandate of the Ontario Council on University Affairs and when it was abolished such responsibilities reverted to the Ministry of Education and Training.

2.4 Reconciling the Interests of the State with those of Autonomous Universities

In view of the vital importance of universities to economic, social, cultural and technological advances in modern society, and the substantial public investment in universities that continues to be made by the state, how does the state balance the need to achieve specific goals and objectives in the economic, social, cultural and technological realms with the needs of universities with respect to academic freedom and institutional autonomy? Many observers share Berdahl's view that there need to be mechanisms for bringing together the perspectives of both the state and the universities to reconcile the divergent interests and forge a constructive relationship built on mutual trust.

In relation to public policy, Ron Watts argues that universities cannot simply be treated as instruments "by which society achieves economic competitiveness and prosperity". Neither can universities take a completely autonomist view, which assumes that only by "standing apart from the immediate concerns of society, can they realize their full potential as centres of learning."¹⁰² Watts concludes that universities and government must be viewed as mutually interdependent, arguing that neither universities nor society can be isolated or independent of each other. They must work together. The question then, is how?

The literature reveals a range of organizational approaches to university-government relations ranging from no central coordination or regulation where individual decisions of

102. Ron Watts, "Universities and Public Policy," *Public Purse, Public Purpose: Autonomy and Accountability in the Groves of Academe*, James Cutt and Rodney Dobell, (Eds.), Halifax: The Institute for Research on Public Policy, 1992, p. 79.

autonomous institutions, based on market forces, the external environment and serendipity shape the development of universities in a given jurisdiction to highly centralized approaches where, in the extreme, universities are effectively agencies of the state. The range of potential structures, based on a compilation of the structural alternatives identified in the literature is illustrated below:

HIGHEST DEGREE OF INSTITUTIONAL AUTONOMY

↑	↑	↑
<u>No Direct Government Regulation or Control</u>		
Autonomous/Unregulated/Laissez-faire:		
Development is shaped by market forces, serendipity and institutional decisions. A laissez-faire stance is adopted by the state. There is no state involvement. Institutions may be privatized. There is an implicit reliance on academic self-governance through professional guilds and market influences to realize the public interest.		
Uncoordinated Development within a Competitive Policy Framework:		
Government establishes a policy and funding framework with incentives and disincentives that maximize competition and minimize government direction and regulation. Government might implement institutional legislation to require institutional differentiation or establish financial incentives and disincentives in relation to access to public funding which institutions may choose to pursue, after which universities would enjoy extensive autonomy.		
<u>Self-Regulation</u>		
Coordination and Planning Undertaken by a Collective Authority Exercising Collective Autonomy:		
System-level coordination and planning would be undertaken by the universities collectively in conjunction with agreed upon state objectives. To be successful, individual institutions would necessarily delegate a degree of authority to the collectivity, which would require sufficient authority to make decisions binding on all members. Such a system could be buttressed by financial incentives or by the potential for unspecified government intervention should collective autonomy become unresponsive to mutually agreed upon public policy objectives. Competition among institutions could exist in certain respects, but would be limited by collective regulation.		

Monitored Self-Regulation

Coordination and Planning Undertaken by a Collective Authority Exercising Collective Autonomy with State Monitoring and State Sanctions for Unsatisfactory or Non-compliance:

System-level coordination and planning would be undertaken by the universities collectively in conjunction with agreed upon state objectives and performance expectations. Individual institutions would delegate a degree of authority to the collectivity, which would have sufficient authority to make decisions binding on all members. Decisions about institutional performance would be buttressed by specific state financial sanctions should collective autonomy become unresponsive to mutually agreed upon public policy objectives or fail to achieve particular objectives.

Coordination and Regulation of Universities by Government

Advisory Intermediary Body:

System development is influenced and shaped by the advice of an agency of government with advisory powers (no executive authority) that consults with the universities and advises government on policies related to system coordination and planning including funding requirements, allocation of funds, academic program quality, development and coordination in relation to policy objectives and societal needs. The advisory body would also recommend on system-level financial incentives and disincentives to achieve publicly enunciated policy objectives.

Regulatory Intermediary Body:

System development would be shaped by an agency of government with monitoring and regulatory authority to undertake and implement comprehensive system planning and coordination functions centrally, including definition of institutional missions, establishment of system enrolment levels, allocation of institutional funding entitlements, authorization of institutional budgets and approval of academic programs. Such bodies would be responsible for mediating conflicts among institutions within the system.

System-level Unitary Governing Board and Senate:

This approach is characterized by the "University of Ontario" concept. There is a single governing board and senate for all universities in a jurisdiction which assumes system-wide responsibility for governance, academic quality, and coordination of the system including the negotiation and approval of institutional missions, enrolment levels, and program mix.

Direct State/Political Control

Centralized Control:

Direct micro management of all aspects of financial and academic management by the government ministry responsible for universities.

↓

↓

↓

HIGHEST DEGREE OF STATE CONTROL

In practice, structures for system-level coordination and planning are typically more complex than the models outlined above would suggest, they often reflect a combination of two or more characteristics of the general ideal types and their operation is frequently affected by financial incentives and disincentives. The approach adopted in each jurisdiction reflects an evolving balance between institutional autonomy on the one hand and state control and public accountability on the other.

2.5 Government Involvement in System-level Coordination and Planning

Left to their own devices and the influences of market forces, publicly funded universities might arguably be less socially responsive than they are in most North American jurisdictions today. However, no one knows if this is the case because governments have generally exerted at least a moderate degree of influence on institutional behaviour which, trends suggest, tends to be gradually increasing. Martin Trow observed that increased government interest and involvement in university development paralleled the increase in university participation rates which have resulted from the transformation of university education from an elite service, catering to a small segment of society defined in terms of a participation rate of less than 15% of the population, to an activity in which there is mass participation of between 15 and 50% of the population, as well as the potential for universal participation of over 50% of the population. Trow concludes:

In every advanced society the problems of higher education are problems associated with growth. Growth poses a variety of problems for the educational systems that experience it and for the societies that support them...growth has its impact on every form of activity and manifestation of higher education.¹⁰³

103. Martin Trow, *Problems in the Transition from Elite to Mass Higher Education*, Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, Berkeley, Reprint, 1973, p. 1.

In jurisdictions like Ontario where higher education is provided by legally autonomous, self-governing universities which in turn, are largely publicly funded, the financial pressures universities place on the public purse generate intense debate over how the public funds received are used. As public expenditures for universities increase or decrease, so increases expectations for accountability in their use. In addition to the public investment in universities, the university's importance to society, and in particular the perceived economic benefits of a highly educated populace, have served to bring state governments and higher education into an ever closer, more complex and potentially troublesome relationship. Aims McGuinness, of the Education Commission of the States, observes:

Renewed recognition is being given to the central role that the higher education system plays in the states' economic future: in the ability to attract new industry and in the state's overall social, economic and cultural well-being. This is fuelling a new sense of urgency regarding the effectiveness and responsiveness of the state's systems for governing and financing higher education.¹⁰⁴

McGuinness warns that university-government relations are complex, and require effective, formal structures to facilitate the resolution of inherently conflicting interests among universities and between universities and the state:

State coordination of higher education is perhaps the most complex balancing act in state government. Conflicting interests are the reality. State interests are not the same as institutional interests, and despite assertions to the contrary, state interests are not simply the sum of the interests of all the institutions in the state. An effective structure is one that draws these conflicting interests together in a way that differences and tensions are resolved before they erupt into major political controversies.¹⁰⁵

The desire for coordination and planning presupposes that institutional and system-level

104. Aims C. McGuinness, Jr. *The Search for More Effective State Policy Leadership in Higher Education*, Denver: Education Commission of the States, 1986, p. 1.

105. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

processes should be organized so as to increase the likelihood that public funds are used in ways that maximize output from given resources and maximize the welfare of society by ensuring an optimal match between expenditures and social preferences. Although it is important to recognize that efficiency cannot be measured precisely in an area such as higher education, where the output is largely intangible and the benefit is spread out over long periods of time, Bowen defines efficiency as a relationship between the variables of cost and outcome:

The degree of efficiency in any activity is commonly measured, or judged, by comparing the resources used and the outcomes or benefits achieved. The greater the benefits with given resources, or the fewer the resources with given benefits, the greater the efficiency. ...[T]he underlying concept is that the use of resources involves a *cost* and that the results should be at least commensurate with that cost. The cost is in the form of sacrificed alternatives. When resources are committed to any given end, the cost consists of the sacrifice of the best alternative end to which the resources might have been committed. ...Thus, for higher education the degree of efficiency is judged by comparing the outcomes (at the margin) with the outcomes that might have been realized if the same resources had been employed for other purposes, such as personal consumption, health services, or national defence. To decide whether the higher educational system should be maintained, expanded, or contracted, one must judge whether greater outcomes could be attained by transferring resources into higher education or out of it.¹⁰⁶

McGuinness's review of state initiatives in the mid-1980s revealed that states sought to strengthen the links between their investment in higher education and a variety of outcomes related to: state economic development; increased differentiation among institutions and programs according to quality and state priorities; the reduction of actual or potential duplication of high-cost graduate and professional programs; the ability of institutions to achieve inter-institutional cooperation; and the ability to close or merge institutions or change institutional mission. State initiatives also dealt with concerns about the effectiveness of the state coordinating or governing structures. In addition, structures for coordination were used

106. Howard R. Bowen, *Investment in Learning*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1977, p. 18.

to enable state officials to escape intense institutional lobbying by competing institutional interests.¹⁰⁷

Institutional differentiation has arisen as a particularly important aspect of state strategies for controlling the costs of providing mass accessibility to higher education. One of the major concerns of system coordination and planning is identifying and achieving an optimal balance between the functions of the universities and available resources. Differentiation may involve specialized institutional types such as two-year university-level colleges or research institutes; program emphasis; modes of program delivery; and functional emphasis such as undergraduate teaching or graduate studies. In 1984, the Bovey Commission identified five “forms” by which universities could be differentiated: by institutional character; sectoral area (mathematical sciences, humanities, social sciences, applied sciences etc.); by individual program; composite method (a combination of two or more of the aforementioned forms), and by “current pattern” or unfettered institutional evolution “in which no categorization has been established”.¹⁰⁸ By forcing institutions to perform different roles and functions, and at different levels of quality, the state attempts to reduce overall costs.

Research suggests that universities typically avoid differentiation. Newman’s research forced him to conclude that universities will not differentiate themselves in terms of institutional mission due to the influence of “the single pyramid of institutional prestige” which drives all institutions in the direction of prestige based on research output. Newman concludes:

107. McGuiness, *The Search for More Effective...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 2-5.

108. The Commission on the Future Development of the Universities of Ontario, *Ontario Universities 1984: Issues and Alternatives*, June 1984, Section 5.3.

Unless missions can be differentiated and multiple pyramids of prestige created, the natural ambitions of the campus cannot become a means for channelling campus entrepreneurship into useful purposes. Instead the result is often that the entrepreneurial drive essential for institutional quality is often diverted into competition among the institutions for prestige and resources.¹⁰⁹

This phenomenon has also been observed by McGuinness in his analysis of trends in state coordination and governance:

...despite the best efforts of state coordinating and governing bodies, the politics and basic incentive structures of state systems seem to lead to uniformity and encourage institutions to aspire to a single rather than multiple definitions of excellent [sic] and prestige.¹¹⁰

System coordination and planning have been advocated as a means to promote institutional diversity and differentiation, control the public costs of university education and maintain quality while facilitating desired levels of accessibility. The nature of the structures adopted to facilitate system coordination and planning directly impact on the nature and pattern of university-government relations in a given jurisdiction.

2.6 Coordinating Agencies as Structures for University System Coordination and Planning

The literature indicates that the statewide coordinating agency has become the most common structure adopted by American states seeking effective means of reconciling state and university interests in a system context. McGuinness notes that system coordination is a function distinct from that of institutional governance:

State co-ordination is not the same as governance. Co-ordination is concerned primarily with the state and system perspective - the framework within which governance takes place. ...An effective co-ordinating mechanism is one that

109. Frank Newman, *Choosing Quality: Reducing Conflict between the State and the University*, Denver: Education Commission of the States, 1987, p. 45.

110. McGuinness, 1986, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

addresses the state or system-wide issues while at the same time reinforcing effective institutional leadership and governance.¹¹¹

While system planning and coordination are often used interchangeably in the vernacular, they have distinct objectives. Planning is “directional” in nature. It establishes goals and guides action. It involves the prearrangement of policy and methods to guide work toward given objectives and generates the action necessary to realize desired results. System planning typically refers to the nature and extent of university services in a particular jurisdiction. It is directed toward multiple activities while guiding and directing the system as a whole. The principal value of planning is in the strategy it provides for reacting to probable and possible future events and changes.

Coordination is operational in nature. Glenny defines coordination as “the act of regulating and combining so as to give harmonious results.” Coordination interrelates and unifies action to achieve predetermined goals. It relates parts of a system to the whole, interrelates parts within the system, and relates the parts and the system to external factors.

The objectives of system coordination are widely agreed to be the prevention of additional costs that might arise from unnecessary duplication of the major functions of the institutions and the improvement of quality and efficiency by providing focus for certain specialized activities. Flowing from this, system coordination aims to ensure:

- programmatic and institutional diversity
- educational responsiveness and innovation
- establishment or closure of graduate and professional programs in response to market needs

111. Aims C. McGuinness, *State Postsecondary Education Structures: Handbook, 1988*, Denver: Education Commission of the States, 1988, p. 10.

- stimulating improvement of undergraduate education
- assurance of student and credit transfer between institutions and programs
- facilitating lifelong education
- determining procedures for terminating obsolete or duplicative existing programs
- identifying the appropriate division of financial contribution between the state and the individual student.¹¹²

Taken together, system planning and coordination typically encompass the functions of master planning, budgeting, program review and policy analysis.

2.6.1 Master Planning

System planning typically involves the development and publication of an action oriented master plan with respect to the number, location, size, and mission of the institutions within a given jurisdiction. It also involves ongoing consideration of programmatic scope. It typically promotes institutional differentiation, program rationalization and inter-institutional articulation. Glenny notes that:

The characteristics which distinguish the master plan from most state surveys are the variety of subjects studied; the volume of data collected; the depth of analyses; the integration of programs, budgets, and building priorities to provide a unity of purpose; the full inclusion of non-public institutions; and the means for step-by-step implementation of the plan, with simultaneous review and revision leading to the fulfilment of major goals.¹¹³

Berdahl described master planning as a complex process involving the identification of key problems, related data collection and analysis, identification and evaluation of options and consequences, selection of goals, and the development of an implementation strategy, a system

112. See D. Kent Halstead, *Statewide Planning in Higher Education*, Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974, pp. 26-28 and Lyman A. Glenny, *Autonomy of Public Colleges: The Challenge of Coordination*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959, pp. 88-113.

113. Lyman Glenny, "State Systems and Plans for Higher Education," in *Autonomy and Interdependence*, Washington, DC: American Council on Education, 1964, p. 35.

for reevaluating goals and a means to achieve them on an ongoing basis.¹¹⁴

Master, long-range or strategic planning is undertaken in jurisdictions with state higher education boards (e.g. Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois, Nevada, New York and West Virginia) and in jurisdictions with coordinating and planning commissions (e.g. Alabama, California, Florida, Maryland, New Jersey, Tennessee and Virginia).¹¹⁵ The literature suggests that the benefits of statewide planning are twofold: creating diversity among institutions and programs while conserving public resources.

In Canada there has been little evidence of master planning, save for in the province of Québec, where, consistent with the principles and plan set out by the 1963 report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education (the Parent Commission), the development of education at all levels in the province was modified and publicly funded education was substantially centralized.

2.6.2 Budgeting

Coordinating bodies involved in the budgeting function typically determine the global/system financial needs through a process of reviewing institutional budgets and subsequently recommending an appropriate level of public subvention for the university system. Budgeting processes used to determine the level of funding to be made available vary and may range from line-by-line budgeting, to zero-based budgeting to formulaic processes.

In addition, coordinating bodies usually have the authority to allocate and distribute funds provided to individual institutions for operating and capital needs once overall funding levels have been determined. This authority is generally regarded as essential to the coordinating

114. Berdahl, *Statewide Coordination...*, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

115. McGuinness, *State Postsecondary Education Structures...*, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

bodies' ability to implement system planning decisions. In the context of system planning, formula funding instruments that allocate available funds among institutions also provide a predictable base for institutional and system planning and budgeting. Where little or no system-level strategic planning is undertaken, the incentives and disincentives built into the formula funding allocative mechanism may act as a surrogate for system coordination and planning.

2.6.3 Academic Program Review

Within the statewide coordinating structures, academic program review and approval is an integral instrument of coordination. Program review may encompass issues of establishment of new institutions, branch campuses or professional schools, the establishment of new programs or courses, and the enrolment levels in, or closure of, existing programs. State coordinating bodies with the power to review existing programs have strived to eliminate programs of marginal quality or productivity, prevent unnecessary duplication, ensure new programmatic needs are met, and restrict growth in high cost program areas to ensure public funds are directed toward maintaining and improving quality in the programs offered. State - university conflict over program approvals can be reduced when the process is linked with a master plan that assigns institutions' basic roles and missions. Berdahl identified a number of approaches to program review:

The administrative procedures employed in program review differ widely and seem to have no particular correlation with type of agency. Quite a few agencies...rely chiefly on staff analysis...; at least one uses a standing committee of lay board members...; several employ statewide committees composed of persons from the institutions...; some lean heavily on outside consultants...; a few favour a mixed pattern, using interinstitutional committees for most judgements and outside consultants for a few others...; and one state has a standing advisory committee whose members are drawn from both inside and outside the state...¹¹⁶

116. Robert Berdahl, *Statewide Coordination...*, *op cit.*, p. 163.

The criteria generally applied to programs under review include the intrinsic merit of the program proposal (if a new program), societal need, the qualifications and accomplishments of those offering the program, the centrality of the program to institutional mission, and unit costs.

2.6.4 Policy Analysis and Intermediary Function

Coordinating agencies typically undertake analysis of planning, budgetary and programmatic data, review options from the standpoint of the public interest in higher education, and develop and transmit advice to the government, which if supported, will be financed if necessary and turned over to the agency for implementation. Successful agencies have the respect and confidence of both the institutions and the government. As Berdahl notes, "Ideally, an agency would identify closely enough with each side to partake of the benefits but not so closely as to suffer the disadvantages."¹¹⁷ However, his research suggested that few agencies have achieved such equilibrium and none have been able to maintain it for any period of time.

2.7 Patterns and Structures for Coordination and Planning

The literature reveals some difficulty in precisely defining the various system-level governing structures which exist in practice because they are not uniform in composition, responsibility or function. In addition to differences in structures between jurisdictions, there are significant differences among types of agencies within jurisdictions. Distinctions have been typically made based on the specific nature of governing and coordinating roles, extent of powers (advisory and regulatory), functional responsibilities (planning, budgeting, programming, personnel decisions) and span of control (all post-secondary institutions, university transfer institutions and full

117. *Ibid.*, p. 186.

universities, or universities only).

The literature identifies two widely adopted patterns of organization for coordination: the consolidated governing board or governing agency, and the coordinating board or agency. In addition, scholars have identified classification schemes including “executive appointed agencies,”¹¹⁸ “advisory boards” connoting coordinating boards without significant authority over programs or budgets,¹¹⁹ the division of coordinating agencies into two types: one “regulatory,” the other an “advisory council,”¹²⁰ the division of coordinating boards into three types: (1) majority of institutional representatives and advisory powers; (2) majority public representatives and advisory powers; (3) majority of public members and regulatory powers in certain areas but not governing responsibility,¹²¹ and informal or voluntary institutionally-based systems (no formal agency at all), where states have neither a single coordinating agency created by statute nor a voluntary association performing a significant statewide coordinating function.¹²² One might be tempted to label the latter pattern one of “no coordination”. However, Berdahl warns against this misleading conclusion, arguing:

In cases where no coordinating agencies (either voluntary or statutory) were set up, normal state organs - the governor’s office, the budget office, legislative committees, the state auditor, etc. - have made decisions (usually on an ad hoc basis) which explicitly or implicitly performed this function.¹²³

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118. R.M. Millard, “Power of state coordinating agencies”, *Improving academic management: A handbook of institutional planning and research*, P. Jedamus and M.W. Peterson (Eds.), San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1980, cited in James C. Hearn and Carolyn P. Griswold, “State-Level Centralization and Policy Innovation in U.S. Postsecondary Education”, *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, Vol. 16, No. 2, Summer 1994, p. 162.
 119. J.D. Millett, “State coordinating boards and statewide governing boards”, *New directions for institutional research: Vol.2(1) - Evaluating statewide boards*, R.O. Berdahl (Ed.), San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1975, cited in James C. Hearn and Carolyn P. Griswold, “State-Level Centralization ...”, *op cit.*, p. 162.
 120. Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *The states and higher education: A proud past and a vital future*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1976, cited in James C. Hearn and Carolyn P. Griswold, “State-Level Centralization ...”, *op cit.*, p. 163.
 121. D. Kent Halstead, *Statewide Planning in Higher Education*, Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974, p. 7, Table I-1.
 122. Berdahl, *Statewide Coordination*, *op cit.*, p. 18.
 123. *Ibid.*, p. 41.

The most frequently cited recent categorization of coordination arrangements was undertaken by Aims McGuinness for the Education Commission of the States.¹²⁴ This approach defines **consolidated governing boards** as those having legal responsibility for the ongoing governance of one or more sectors of postsecondary education within a state. Characteristically, states adopting this approach create one board with legal governing authority over the operation and management of most or all of their public institutions. McGuinness notes that of the 19 states with consolidated governing board arrangements in 1988, 12 had authority over all public postsecondary institutions and seven had authority over all 4-year public postsecondary institutions.

In states where there are separate boards to govern the various public systems and institutions, **state coordinating boards** are often established to fulfill coordination and oversight responsibilities. While state coordinating boards lack the governing boards' legal responsibility for management and operation, they frequently have authority over the approval of new and existing programs, and/or institutional budgets. Such coordinating boards, which McGuinness deems "strong coordinating boards", are quite powerful relative to coordinating boards with a purely advisory mandate. Coordinating boards established with only an advisory capacity have no regulatory authority over program approval or budgeting matters.¹²⁵ Of the 23 states with coordinating board arrangements in 1988, McGuinness notes that eight had authority over budgets and program approval, one had authority over budgets only, 11 had authority over program approval only and three had no authority over budgets or program approval.

124. See Aims McGuinness, *State Postsecondary Education Structures....*, *op cit.*

125. Within the typology developed by R.O. Berdahl, a distinction is made between advisory boards composed of a majority of institutional representatives and advisory boards composed entirely or in the majority of public members. See Berdahl, *Statewide Coordination*, *op cit.*, p. 19.

McGuinness noted that **planning agencies**, with even less power than coordinating boards, were established in four states. McGuinness notes that planning agencies typically exist in states where higher education governance is the responsibility of two or more boards. The addition of state advisory boards in states with statewide governing boards for senior institutions was first noted in the academic literature by Millet in 1984. His research suggested that while such advisory agencies lacked formal authority, they appeared to be exerting significant influence on policy decisions.

Finally, McGuinness identifies four states with **mixed governance arrangements** which may include agencies with responsibility for all levels of education, states with consolidated governing boards and a separate statutory coordinating agency, or other state specific structures.

2.8 Structures for Voluntary or Mandatory Coordination

With respect to informal or voluntary systems of coordination the literature suggests that its attractiveness stems from its potential to satisfy the legislatures' concerns for efficient and effective use of scarce public resources while requiring minimum diminution of institutional independence. Characteristics of successful voluntary coordination appear to be seven-fold:

- 1) a recognition of the need for coordination by all parties;
- 2) mutual respect and trust among parties;
- 3) environment of confidentiality permitting full-disclosure of institutionally sensitive information;

- 4) horizontal equity among institutions;¹²⁶
- 5) ability to achieve unanimity and maintain consensus;
- 6) threat of government sanction or intervention if voluntary coordination is unsuccessful or not undertaken;
- 7) use of professional research staff, independent of any institution, to collect and analyse data and make recommendations.¹²⁷

The disadvantages of voluntary systems of coordination have also been documented and appear to accrue to both certain types of institutions as well as to the public interest. These disadvantages include:

- 1) a tendency to preserve the *status quo*;
- 2) domination by the largest or oldest institutions;
- 3) tendency to operate from a position of self-interest resulting in inadequate representation of the public interest in policy and decision-making and in the collection and presentation of data;
- 4) ineffective coordination of large systems of institutions due to the formation of cliques and blocs which engender mistrust and make consensus difficult to achieve;
- 5) reluctance to deal with issues deemed highly controversial with the possibility that issues important from a system-perspective such as credit transfer among different postsecondary sectors or issues with financial implications may not be addressed at all and ignored;
- 6) unclear public accountability.¹²⁸

The literature on U.S. state coordinating structures suggests that each state that has adopted a particular structure for coordination and planning has done so on the assumption that

126. Meaning that all institutions are treated equally despite differences among them as contrasted with vertical equity where the differences among institutions are recognized and the institutions are treated unequally but fairly.

127. See Glenny, *Autonomy of Public Colleges...*, *op cit.*, pp. 246-248 and Hurtubise and Rowat, *The University, Society and Government...*, *op cit.*, p. 85, and Berdahl, *Statewide Coordination*, *op cit.*, p. 31.

128. See Glenny, *Autonomy of Public Colleges...*, *op cit.*, pp. 249-262 and Berdahl, *Statewide Coordination*, *op cit.*, p. 32.

such a structure will best serve its political, social and economic interests. What one cannot conclude from the literature is whether particular state coordinating structures provide better outcomes than others or what postsecondary sectors would look like having had alternative structures. However, the literature appears to suggest that mandatory or statutory state structures for coordination and planning are more successful than voluntary structures in their ability to reduce destructive competition among institutions for state funds, and contribute significantly and positively to the efficiency and effectiveness of system outcomes by exerting positive leadership.¹²⁹

As Burton Clark noted, the structural arrangements that have facilitated system development at one point in time, may prove too “constraining” at another¹³⁰ underlining that the specific structure itself is less important than the existence of some formal structure whether voluntary or mandatory. However, some of Glenny’s earliest findings, derived from a comparative analysis of formal and voluntary agencies suggest that voluntary agencies are less effective in serving the public interest:

In short, it seems clear that even if the voluntary systems were to make moderate improvements in organization and operation, there is little hope that they could serve the interests and needs of state-wide higher education as well as formal coordinating agencies. Their service in the interests of state-wide higher education cannot be as effective as that of formal coordinating agencies with legally assigned powers and responsibilities. The primary motive of participants in voluntary systems is the welfare of individual institutions, not the system as a whole.¹³¹

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129. Hearn and Griswold’s 1994 study concluded that “consolidated governing boards and strong coordinating boards carry virtually identical implications for policy innovation”, having found that both are positively associated with innovation in academic areas touching upon the core education values and concerns of higher education. Yet both structures had no relationship with innovations in financing postsecondary attendance. They argued this was related to the fact that financing issues were essentially redistributive rather than regulatory in intent, and thereby subject to a more diffuse set of influences. See pp. 183-184.
130. Burton Clark, *The Higher Education System: Academic organization in cross-national perspective*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983, p. 204.
131. Glenny, *Autonomy of Public Colleges.... op. cit.*, p. 262.

The literature provides scant evidence of effective voluntary cooperation at the system level. It is generally argued that this model is unworkable as an instrument of collective coordination and planning because of the unwillingness of member institutions to cede sufficient authority to the collectivity or to impose sanctions for divergent behaviour. Leslie provides an analysis of the nature of the barriers to voluntary cooperation in the Canadian context:

Voluntary cooperation or coordination among universities is rendered difficult by their being in competition with each other, especially as regards the introduction of new academic programs. The older and larger institutions seek to preserve an established position vis-a-vis other universities of like character, often in other provinces; they are correspondingly concerned about the dispersal of financial resources among universities within their own province. By contrast, many of the newer universities are anxious to diversify their programming and to share the field equally with the traditionally leading universities. They chafe at restrictions of their further development.¹³²

Despite the advantages offered by mandatory coordinating structures, McGuinness notes that, in the “no man’s land between state government and the institutions,” many statewide coordinating and governing boards are constantly subject to criticism and face proposals for their elimination in nearly every legislative session. Although few challenges to their existence are successful, those challenges that are deemed of a serious nature are frequently grounded in the belief that the “existing board has been focusing more on detailed administrative or internal management affairs rather than the strategic policy issues facing the system or the state”.¹³³ Such claims typically emanate from the institutions concerned. From the legislator’s perspective, mandatory coordinating boards are, as Berdahl noted, vulnerable to challenge on the grounds that they are not imposing on the institutional prerogative enough, leading

132. Peter M. Leslie, *Canadian Universities 1980 and Beyond: Enrolment, Structural Change and Finance*, Ottawa: Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, September 1980, pp. 58.

133. McGuinness, *The Search for More Effective State Policy...*, *op cit.*, p. 11.

legislators to describe their state's coordinating board as "a voluntary system with a fig leaf, operating essentially to negotiate bargains among thieves."¹³⁴

Whether a mandatory or voluntary coordinating mechanism is adopted, Burton Clark argues that the exercise of state-wide coordination involves more than a simple bilateral relationship between the universities and government. His conceptual framework views coordination as an exercise that has political, bureaucratic, professional academic and market influences:

All...systems involve all four of the major forms specified here and all four are apparently required for effectiveness. The special function of political coordination is to articulate a variety of public interests...as these are defined by prevailing groups within and outside of government. The special function of bureaucratic coordination is to compose a formal system out of fragmented parts and to provide fair administration. The function of academic oligarchy is to protect professional self-rule, to lodge the control of academic work, including its standards, in the hands of those permanently involved and most intimately connected with it. And that special function of the market is to enhance and protect freedom of choice, for personnel, clientele, and institutions, and thereby indirectly promote system flexibility and adaptability.¹³⁵

Clark notes that the balance among the four elements varies widely from system to system.

2.9 A Brief Overview of System-wide Coordination in Ontario, Canada and the United States

In applying Clark's conceptual framework to the Ontario university system in 1985, Robert Berdahl concluded that Ontario's system of coordination had strong academic participation and market components but that "what may now be needed...is a stronger coordination role on the part of the political and bureaucratic elements of the provincial

134. Berdahl, *System Coordination...*, *op cit.*, p. 32.

135. Burton Clark, "The Many Pathways of Academic Coordination", 1979, Vol. 8, No. 2, pp. 265-6. Quoted in Robert O. Berdahl, "Universities and society: mutual obligations", *Ontario Universities: Access, Operations and Funding*, Thomas Courchene *et al* (Eds.), Ontario Economic Council, December 1985, pp. 10-11.

government."¹³⁶ Such conclusions were based on the observations of recently imposed fiscal restraints on universities, coupled with a refusal

to grant OCUA the executive authority which would be needed to implement that negative fiscal policy with minimum damage to quality standards in higher education. Instead, lacking such authority, OCUA has had to rely on the ability of the universities through the COU to achieve voluntarily 'system rationalization' by themselves. Inter-institutional co-operation at its best may be only partly effective during a time of growth, when there is something for everyone to share; to ask that of a university system on the way down...is really a pious hope, and the results in Ontario bear witness to that fact.¹³⁷

As Berdahl notes, there is an inevitable threat to overall quality standards in a system which lacks the authority to undertake selective retrenchment during periods of fiscal constraint or contraction because under such circumstances the public interest is not well served by pretending that all academic programs in all institutions are of equal value. Berdahl observed with some concern:

For some reason the provincial government has been reluctant to delegate the executive authority to its co-ordinating board - perhaps feeling that it wanted to honour university autonomy by avoiding such authority. ...[T]hat self-denying ordinance plus severe underfunding has combined to create a potentially disastrous policy for postsecondary education.¹³⁸

Over ten years later, while U.S. state systems continue to move in the direction of mandatory state-wide coordinating agencies, Ontario has eliminated its advisory body - the Ontario Council on University Affairs, and a number of Canadian provinces have moved away from the use of intermediary bodies.

Widespread use of state coordinating agencies in the United States resulted from the

136. Robert O. Berdahl, "Universities and society: mutual obligations", *Ontario Universities: Access, Operations and Funding*, Thomas Courchene *et al* (Eds.), Ontario Economic Council, December 1985, pp. 12-13.

137. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

138. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

massive growth in postsecondary enrolment that began in the 1950s and continued into the early 1970s. Berdahl's 1971 study of statewide coordination of higher education in the United States revealed that in 1969, only two states lacked some form of coordinating agency and only two others relied on voluntary association to perform the coordinating function, with the most popular form of system governance being manifest in the form of the statewide coordinating agency. During the 1970s and early 1980s, the pace of change in statewide coordination and control slowed, but continued in the direction of centralization. McGuinness notes that by 1972, 47 states had established either consolidated governing boards or statewide coordinating agencies. Of the 27 coordinating boards in existence in 1988, all had responsibility for postsecondary planning, and budgeting (either at the system or institutional level). All had responsibility for new or existing program review or approval, with some jurisdictions such as Alabama, Indiana, New Jersey, Oregon, Virginia and Washington delegating responsibility for both the review of existing programs and the approval of new programs to statewide mandatory coordinating bodies.¹³⁹

In the Canadian context, coordinating boards have existed in most provinces at some point in time; however, in contrast to the American experience, their possession of broad executive authority has been the exception rather than the rule. In 1997, there are four Canadian coordinating bodies, usually referred to as intermediary bodies. These are the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation in Québec, the Manitoba University Grants Commission which is in the process of being strengthened and transformed into the Manitoba Council on Post-Secondary Education; and the Nova Scotia Council on Higher Education. In addition, the

139. See Aims C. McGuinness, *Statewide Postsecondary Education Structures...*, *op cit.*

provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island jointly support a regional intermediary body, the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission.

The Ontario Council on University Affairs, an advisory body to the Ontario Minister responsible for universities since 1974, was abolished in mid-1996 and has not been replaced. In view of the fact that Ontario has had some form of intermediary/advisory body since 1961, for the first time in 35 years, Ontario universities now deal either individually, or collectively through the Council of Ontario Universities (COU), with the state apparatus, without any “buffer”. This will likely redouble the importance of the province’s funding mechanism as an instrument of state coordination and planning and may enhance the importance of COU. Alberta, British Columbia, Newfoundland, and Saskatchewan have no intermediary agency between the universities and their respective provincial governments.

While “university system” in the U.S. literature tends to denote a degree of central coordination by design, Peter Leslie notes that in the Canadian context this is not the case and that “the term does not necessarily imply either conscious design or central control.”¹⁴⁰ As Skolnik and Jones point out:

Some of the more fundamental differences in the coordination of higher education between states and provinces can be attributed to differences in government structure. The parliamentary system employed by the Canadian provinces involves a series of structures and a political dynamic that sharply contrasts with the American state model.¹⁴¹

In 1980, Leslie’s analysis of the degree of central coordination in Ontario suggested that, while “the identity of a central directing mechanism is unobvious” the Council of Ontario

140. Peter M. Leslie, *Canadian Universities 1980 and Beyond: Enrolment, Structural Change and Finance*, Ottawa: Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, September 1980, p. 56.

141. Michael L. Skolnik and Glen A. Jones, “A comparative Analysis of Arrangements for State Coordination of Higher Education in Canada and the United States”, *Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 63, No. 2. March/April 1992, p. 128.

Chapter 2: The Nature of University-Government Relations

Universities and its advisory committees, the Ontario Council on University Affairs and the responsible government ministry formed “a network of coordinating institutions which palpably do limit university autonomy.”¹⁴² While these institutions were described as “coordinating”, Leslie’s description of system outcomes indicate they had not been demonstrably successful in this regard: “Ontario has not been markedly successful in restraining the proliferation of new programs and it has certainly not been successful in bringing about the elimination of redundant ones.”¹⁴³

The Council of Ontario Universities consists of the president of each Ontario university and an “academic colleague” elected by the university senate. It provides a forum for research and information sharing among universities and acts as an advocate for university interests vis-a-vis government and its agencies. Leslie observes that the role of COU is somewhat ambivalent:

In seeking to ward off direct government controls over the university sector, the COU itself becomes to some degree an agent of the state, hedging in the autonomy of its member institutions. It cannot issue instructions to them, but it does have an important role to play...in the moulding of the Ontario universities into a system.¹⁴⁴

The Ontario Council on University Affairs (OCUA), the purely advisory buffer body agency between the Ontario universities from 1974 to 1996, never possessed executive authority comparable to the higher education commissions which existed in British Columbia and Saskatchewan (both to the mid 1980s), Manitoba and the Maritimes. The OCUA was responsible for developing and advising the government on policy issues, new program funding, system financial requirements, and funding allocations all from the perspective of the

142. Peter M. Leslie, *Canadian Universities 1980 and Beyond...*, *op cit.*, p. 90.

143. *Ibid.*

144. *Ibid.*, pp. 92-93.

public interest and operated at arms-length from both government and the institutions.

As Skolnik observed, it is typical in the Canadian context that:

each university is answerable only to its own board of governors; provincial governments intervene hardly at all in the operation of universities; and there is little, if any, provincial direction of the planning and development of university systems. In fact, the so-called “public” universities in Canada may be subjected to less direct intervention into their activities by government than are the private universities in the United States.¹⁴⁵

What is central to this thesis is why this absence of effective formal structures for system coordination and planning is the case in Ontario. As it will be demonstrated in the next two chapters, since the 1960s, the Ontario government has regularly turned for advice on enhancing system coordination and planning to commissioned advisors and advisory bodies which have repeatedly identified a need for greater system coordination and planning of the province’s university system and the means to achieve it.

145. Michael L. Skolnik, *Odd Country Out: A Speculative Commentary On Possible Causes and Consequences of the Absence of a National Policy Toward Higher Education in Canada*, Paper presented at a symposium on National Policy and Higher Education, Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education, Boston, MA, November 2, 1991. p. 4. Quoted in Glen Jones, “Higher Education Policy in Ontario”, *Higher Education Policy: An International Comparative Perspective*, Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1993, p. 233.

Chapter 3: Planning for Expansion

3.1 Post-War Expansion of Canadian Universities and the Role of the Federal Government

At the conclusion of World War II, universities played a key role in the orderly reintroduction of the returning veterans into Canadian society. Ontario veterans returned home to enrol in five universities: Toronto, Queen's, Western (with affiliated colleges in Waterloo and Windsor), McMaster, which had moved from Toronto to Hamilton in 1930, and Ottawa. The newly established Carleton College would not obtain university status until 1957. Of these universities only Toronto, Queen's and Western were eligible for the provincial grants available at the time. In the period immediately following World War II, the Federal government played a unique role in financing universities. Save for the University of Toronto, universities at that time were small and, despite provincial support for those eligible, under-resourced. The Federal government, in conjunction with the National Conference of Canadian Universities (NCCU),¹⁴⁶ undertook to provide university education for returning veterans. The *Veterans Rehabilitation Act* ensured that the Federal government paid the tuition fees of qualifying veterans and provided a grant to the receiving university of \$150 per veteran. University enrolment in Canada increased by 46% in one year. In 1946-47, demobilized servicemen accounted for 44% of all university students.¹⁴⁷ However, the significant increases in university enrolment were due to more than just the intake of veterans since the number of veterans supported by the federal grants program dwindled after 1947-48. In fact, most veterans completed their university educations by 1951. Yet university enrolment continued

146. The NCCU was the precursor to the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada.

147. David Cameron, *More Than an Academic Question: Universities, Government and Public Policy in Canada*, Halifax: The Institute for Research on Public Policy, 1991, p. 44. In 1947, there were over 15,000 undergraduate ex-service students in the Ontario universities.

to increase and the phenomenon occurred across Canada. As Cameron notes: "Discounting veterans, university enrolment in Canada increased from 36,000 in 1941-42 to 61,600 in 1951-52, an increase of almost 70 per cent in 10 years."¹⁴⁸

In Ontario, university undergraduate enrolment had hovered at around 12,000 full-time students since the late 1920s. Between 1940 and 1945, total full-time university enrolment had jumped to nearly 22,000 students. Enrolment levels remained at just over 20,000 from 1952 to 1955, after which levels steadily rose.¹⁴⁹ Between 1945 and 1995, full-time university enrolment in Ontario increased more than ten-fold, from approximately 22,000 to 227,000 students. Full-time undergraduate enrolment grew from approximately 20,000 to 203,000 and full-time graduate enrolment increased from approximately 1,500 to 24,000 during this period.¹⁵⁰

In view of the skyrocketing student demand for university education in addition to the "veterans bulge", which nearly doubled Ontario university enrolment levels, the institutions turned to both federal and provincial levels of government for financial support. The recommendations of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, established in 1949, provided justification for a continued Federal policy of financial support for universities.

148. *Ibid.*, p. 45.

149. Robin Harris, "Ontario and its Universities", *The House that Ryerson Built: Essays in Education to Mark Ontario's Bicentennial*. (Hugh Oliver, Mark Holmes, Ian Winchester, Eds.), Toronto: OISE Press, 1984, p. 152.

150. The source of the 1945 data is from Statistics Canada, *Historical Compendium of Education Statistics from Confederation to 1975*, Ottawa: May 1978, No. 81-568, p. 211. The source of the 1995 Fall headcount data is from USIS-UAR Statistical System, Ministry of Education and Training, Ontario, 1996, and includes data for the Ontario universities, their affiliates and federates, OISE, Dominican College and the Ontario College of Art. Although part-time enrolment figures for 1945 were not available for Fall 1995, (headcounts) USIS-UAR data indicate that there were also approximately 80,000 undergraduate and 11,000 graduate students studying in Ontario on a part-time basis. In comparing 1945 data to 1995 data, it must be noted that student enrolment definitions, and the institutions surveyed, will not be strictly comparable.

The Commission was directed to conduct a sweeping review of national institutions and programs related to the development of Canadian culture and to make recommendations with respect to “their most effective conduct.”¹⁵¹ Despite the silence of the British North America Act in regard to higher education, education generally was clearly designated as a provincial responsibility. However, provincial jurisdiction was subtly challenged by the recommendations of the Commission. Although universities were not mentioned within the Commission’s terms of reference, of the five commissioners, four had direct university ties: the Chair, the Right Honourable Vincent Massey, P.C., C.H. was Chancellor of the University of Toronto; The Most Reverend Georges-Henri Lévesque was Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences at Laval University; Miss Hilda Neatby was a Professor of History and Acting Department Head at the University of Saskatchewan; and Arthur Surveyor, Esq. of Montreal was a Civil Engineer. It was not, therefore, surprising that the Commissioners “...naturally found it impossible to ignore the role which Canadian universities play in the subjects with which we are formally concerned...”¹⁵²

In 1951, the Commission outlined the important role played by the university in Canadian society, and its primary responsibility for the scientific research “essential to material well-being and national security”, noting that “the whole scheme of scientific research in Canada assumes the continuance and the expansion of university work.”¹⁵³ The Commission further argued that in the absence of resources for planned development, and faced with falling revenues and rising costs, the universities’ efforts to meet societal needs were in jeopardy and

151. Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, 1949-1951, *Report*, Ottawa: King’s Printer, 1951, p. xi.

152. *Ibid.*, p. 132.

153. *Ibid.*, p. 136.

national intervention was warranted:

Universities have become essential institutions of higher education, of general culture, of specialized and professional training and of advanced scientific research. For years they have been handicapped by inadequate income; now they face a financial crisis. Their enforced economies have had many unhappy effects: important plans of development and expansion have been curtailed. The quality of the work done has been impaired, the composition of the student body has been adversely affected. The result... which we consider to be the most dangerous because the most subtle, is...the neglect and distortion of the humanities. We have been told that although penury is by no means the sole cause of this unhappy situation, it has been an important contributing factor. Under contemporary demands the modern university is urged to provide expanding facilities for technical training. The urge "to speed up production" and to emphasize technology in the university's curricula has led to a growing stress on purely utilitarian subjects in academic courses. The practical result has been..."conspiracies to prevent people from being educated." It is certainly neither our right nor our wish to tell the universities how to do their work, but, if financial stringency prevents these great institutions from being, as they have said, "nurseries of a truly Canadian civilization and culture," we are convinced that this is a matter of national concern.¹⁵⁴

The Commission went on to recommend "[t]hat...the Federal Government make annual contributions to support the work of the universities on the basis of the population of each of the provinces of Canada".¹⁵⁵ This advice was accepted and, for 1951-52, the Federal government provided \$7.1 million in grants to universities, 50 cents per capita of the Canadian population, divided into provincial entitlements on the basis of population and paid directly to universities and colleges, regardless of their denominational status, in proportion to their share of enrolment in each province. The grants were:

...designed...to assist the universities to maintain the highly qualified staffs and the working conditions which are essential for the proper performance of their functions - in other words, to maintain quality rather than to increase existing facilities.¹⁵⁶

154. *Report: Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences 1949-51*, Ottawa: King's Printer, 1951, p. 143.

155. *Ibid.*, p. 355.

156. David Cameron, *More Than an Academic Question: Universities, Government and Public Policy in Canada.*, p. 48, citing Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 4th Session, 21st Parliament.

This constituted the first form of direct formula operating grant support for Ontario universities.

Subsequently, in addition to promoting universities as socio-cultural assets, the 1958 Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects, chaired by Walter Gordon, a Toronto Chartered Accountant, linked university education to economic growth and individual prosperity. The improvement and expansion of universities were perceived to be central to national, and by inference, provincial economic development.

In 1964, the Economic Council of Canada, in its *First Annual Review: Economic Goals for Canada to 1970*, similarly argued for the importance of investment in higher education in relation to the growth of the national economic well-being. To achieve its goals for the Canadian economy, it called for, among other things, an increased investment in human resources to improve knowledge and skills, to ensure the highly educated, research intensive and highly competitive economy it envisioned could be achieved.¹⁵⁷

Financing Higher Education in Canada, the report of a Commission to the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada chaired by Vincent W. Bladen in 1965,¹⁵⁸ supported the findings of the Gordon Commission, and concluded that there was significant demand for higher education. The expansion of university programs and services was, therefore, essential. The report stated: "The people demand it; our economic growth requires it; our governments must take the action necessary to implement it."¹⁵⁹ This report advocated shared federal and provincial

157. Economic Council of Canada, *First Annual Review: Economic Goals for Canada to 1970*, Ottawa: Queen's Printer, December 1964, pp. 187-188.

158. Vincent W. Bladen was at the time a Professor of Political Economy and Dean of the Faculty of Arts & Sciences, University of Toronto.

159. Vincent W. Bladen, "The Bladen Commission Recommends...", *University Affairs*, Vol.7, No. 1, October 1965, p. 1.

involvement in the expansion of higher education in Canada.¹⁶⁰

The second annual review of the Economic Council of Canada, *Towards Sustained and Balanced Economic Growth*,¹⁶¹ provided further evidence of the economic benefits associated with public investment in higher education. The Economic Council concluded that approximately one quarter of the real growth in personal income in Canada since 1911 could be attributed directly to increased levels of education. With respect to the economic benefits of expenditures on higher education, the Council estimated that:

...the returns on the 'human investment' in high school and university education in Canada are in the range of 15 to 20 per cent per year, with slightly higher rates for an investment in a university education than in a high school education.¹⁶²

The Council argued that its findings

...have an important implication for Canadian economic policy - suggesting that relatively greater emphasis should be placed on facilitating expanding investment in education in relation to expanding investment in other assets. In fact, this conclusion would appear to be in general accordance with the growing concern in many parts of the Canadian economy that the shortage of skilled and trained technical, professional and managerial manpower is even more critical than the problem of enlarging the physical facilities required for increasing output.¹⁶³

The Council recommended "...that investment in education be accorded the highest rank in the scale of priorities." The objectives they recommended were two-fold:

...a rapid and substantial expansion of post-secondary education in all parts of Canada...to provide a ready opportunity to every qualified Canadian student so that financial obstacles will be eliminated as a barrier to higher education...[and to ensure the] ...development and implementation of greatly expanded

160. This component of the Commission's advice was thwarted by constitutional concerns which resulted in federal withdrawal from matters of post-secondary education, except for the provision of funds for higher education to provincial governments and direct funding to institutions for research. Percy Smith, "Tidy Minds, Untidy Solutions: University Organization in Ontario" in *Higher Education*, No. 13, 1984, p. 571.

161. Chaired by John Deutsch, formerly Vice-Principal of Queen's University.

162. Economic Council of Canada, *Second Annual Review: Towards Sustained and Balanced Economic Growth*, Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1965, p. 90.

163. *Ibid.*, p. 91.

programmes to upgrade and bring up to date the education and skill qualifications of the existing labour force, including professional workers and management.¹⁶⁴

During the period in which the federal government was aggressively encouraging expansion of the range of university programs, the number of students enrolled and research, Ontario was attempting to grasp the fiscal and policy implications of a burgeoning university system. A gradual evolution had begun which would shift the emphasis on individual institutional expansion toward greater system coordination and planning.

3.2 Provincial Government-University Relations in Ontario in the Post WWII Era

At the end of World War II there were five degree-granting institutions in Ontario - two were denominational (McMaster University and the University of Ottawa¹⁶⁵), and three were secular (University of Toronto, the University of Western Ontario and Queen's University). McMaster became a secularized university in 1957 and the University of Ottawa followed suit in 1965, making both eligible for full provincial funding support. The University of Windsor (1962)¹⁶⁶, Waterloo Lutheran University (1959)¹⁶⁷ and the University of Waterloo (1959) emerged from colleges previously affiliated with the University of Western Ontario. A flurry of activity between 1957 and 1965 saw the following seven additional universities established:

164. *Ibid.*, p. 171.

165. Both McMaster and Ottawa universities were in receipt of provincial grants for the nondenominational programs offered since the late 1940s (Hamilton College in the case of McMaster University and in the case of the University of Ottawa science and medicine programs were funded).

166. The University of Windsor was founded in 1964 based on Assumption College, which had been an affiliate of Western from 1919 to 1953 and had received degree-granting status in 1953 as Assumption University.

167. Waterloo Lutheran University did not become secularized and eligible for full provincial funding until 1973. At that time, it adopted the name Wilfrid Laurier University. Between 1967-68 and 1973, Waterloo Lutheran University received provincial funding at a rate of 50% which constituted the Federal flow-through component of university funding during that period.

Carleton University (1957),¹⁶⁸ Laurentian University (1959), York University (1959), Trent University (1963), Brock University (1964),¹⁶⁹ the University of Guelph (1964),¹⁷⁰ and Lakehead University (1965),¹⁷¹ bringing the total number of universities to 15. Ryerson Polytechnic Institute was established in 1970. Like Lakehead University, it was initially established as a provincial institute of technology.

While university expansion was encouraged by Federal funding, universities and provincial governments were grappling with the financial implications of institutional expansion and the increase in student demand for a university education. Between 1951 and 1961 there was both an increase in the size of the 18-21 year old age cohort from 264,300 to 339,800 and an increase in the university participation rate which jumped from 7.07% to 9.36% .¹⁷² Cameron refers to the period to 1960 as a "virtual revolution" of higher education in Canada characterized by massive physical expansion of the major universities, growing autonomy for junior and affiliated colleges, the transformation of denominational colleges into public universities, and community pressure for new institutions in cities then without a university or college.¹⁷³ In the post-war period, university enrolment nearly doubled from that of the pre-war levels. At the 1955 annual meeting of the National Conference of Canadian Universities (NCCU), university presidents were presented with the results of a study by

168. Created in 1942 and provincially-funded since 1951 as Carleton College.

169. York, Brock and Trent Universities were the only completely new institutions established. York University operated as an affiliate of the University of Toronto during its first four years of operation.

170. Previously provincially-funded for a number of years by the Department of Agriculture as the Ontario Agricultural College, the Ontario Veterinary College and the Macdonald Institute.

171. Originally established in 1946 as Lakehead Technical Institute and provincially-funded since 1958 as Lakehead College.

172. The Honourable John P. Robarts, Premier of Ontario, *Statement to the Ontario Legislature*, Thursday March 21, 1963, p. 3.

173. David Cameron, *More Than an Academic Question...*, *op cit.*, p. 68.

Edward F. Sheffield which projected a second doubling of students in the succeeding decade.¹⁷⁴

A crisis was perceived by both universities and governments as a result of a rise in the number of potential students caused by the post-war "baby boom" and an explosion in the demand for highly trained personnel. Within a year it became clear that Sheffield's startling projections had been too low as actual enrolments exceeded projections. Projections accepted by the Ontario government suggested that enrolment in Ontario would rise from 55,000 full-time undergraduate students in 1965 to between 91,000 and 100,000 by 1970.¹⁷⁵

The universities in Ontario, finding themselves in a period of exponential expansion, feared rapid growth without additional funding. Provincial governments everywhere became much more active in the design and financing of universities and colleges.¹⁷⁶ In post-war Ontario, provincial funding was a major instrument of public policy with respect to universities. It had been a matter of public policy since 1868 that only non-denominational universities were eligible for Ontario government grants. The post-World War II Federal government grants, extended to all universities and colleges regardless of denominational status, diverged from this provincial funding principle. Moreover, the government of Ontario allocated all operating grants to universities on a discretionary basis determined initially by the Department of Education, and from 1964 by the Department of University Affairs. Recognition of the need for the relationship between the universities and the government of Ontario to become more systematic resulted in the introduction, in 1951, of a series of

174. Stenton, *op. cit.*, p. 46. In fact, the doubling occurred in a period of only eight years.

175. As noted by Stenton, "In the six-year period since the Sheffield projections had been made (1954-55) to the time the Jackson projections were reviewed (1960-61) Ontario university full-time undergraduate enrolment had increased by 48% from 19,137 to 28,389." Stenton, *Op. cit.* pp. 50-51.

176. Cameron, *op. cit.*, p. 92

provincial mechanisms for dealing with universities individually and collectively. The role of negotiating funding entitlements on behalf of the Provincial government was carried out by advisors to the government to 1958, then by a technical committee of four senior civil servants, and then, beginning in 1961, by a Provincial advisory committee - the Advisory Committee on University Affairs (ACUA). ACUA was composed originally of government representatives with the Minister of Education as Chair, but was broadened to include a majority of members drawn from outside government in 1964. Cameron notes that:

In advising the government on the financial needs of the provincially supported universities, the committee undertook line-by-line reviews of institutional budgets, in order to fix the size of the "deficits" between anticipated revenues and expenditures that would then be forwarded to the Premier as the recommended grants.¹⁷⁷

A government review and subsequent negotiations with each eligible institution resulted in an allocation. Also in 1964, the ACUA was made advisory to the Minister of the newly established Department of University Affairs, rather than to the government as a whole.¹⁷⁸

Such structural arrangements were developed to distance the government and its Ministers from directly negotiating university funding levels and budgets. Stewart notes, however, the hesitancy with which the first requests for specific data from the universities about enrolment, fees, faculty and salary scales, income and expenditures were made "out of respect for the principle of institutional autonomy."¹⁷⁹ As a result, such requests were made

177. *Ibid.*, p. 98.

178. Robin Harris, "The Evolution of a Provincial System of Higher Education in Ontario", *On Higher Education*, D.F. Dadson, Editor, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966, pp. 55-57.

179. *Ibid.*, Footnote 19, p. 133. As noted in *The Learning Society: Report of the Commission on Post-Secondary Education in Ontario*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, 1972, pp. 9-10, between 1920 and 1945, the Provincial government had been content with the idea of university independence as long as it did not result in the unreasonable expenditure of public funds, and as long as the behaviour of institutions and their members did not become the cause of public controversy or embarrassment to the government. The *Report* indicates that by adopting a policy of non-involvement, the government provided a protective environment in which "the concept of university autonomy became more firmly established and, to a considerable extent, set the pattern that prevails today.", citing

over the signature of the Minister of Education until 1962. Stewart notes that after that time "the government quickly moved to have the institutions forward the information requested directly to members of staff..."¹⁸⁰ Support for university independence was outlined in detail by the Premier of Ontario, John Robarts, in 1963:

This brings me to the point of the desirability of maintaining the independence of our universities. Indeed, I should go even further and say that this is essential. To achieve independence, a university must be dependent in part on popular support from endowments, if possible, and students' fees. Added to this are the indispensable government grants. Government grants, however, should not be such as to interfere with the independent nature of a university. This is the position that we have always maintained and will continue to uphold...¹⁸¹

Throughout the 1950s, the Ontario university community expressed considerable dissatisfaction with the procedures used to allocate the discretionary grants. The concerns related to infringement on autonomy, lack of public accountability, disincentives to private philanthropy, lack of equity among institutional allocations and little predictability in finances and resources.¹⁸² The initial process of funding universities was unsophisticated, highly informal and undertaken in the absence of any objectives related to coordination or planning of a university "system". Indeed, "Government had no way of determining in a systematic manner, the actual needs of universities".¹⁸³ Nor was there any assessment of societal need vis-à-vis new or existing university programs. Although by the late 1950s and early 1960s, the

E.E. Stewart, *The Role of Government in the Development of the Universities of Ontario 1791-1964*, Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, University of Toronto, 1970.

180. Cameron, *op. cit.*, p. 133, citing E.E. Stewart, *The Role of the Provincial Government in the Development of the Universities of Ontario, 1791-1964*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971, p. 202.
181. The Honourable John P. Robarts, Premier of Ontario, *Statement to the Ontario Legislature*, Thursday March 21, 1963, p. 14.
182. Stenton, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-65.
183. *Ibid.*, p. 62.

discretionary funding relationship between the Provincial government and the universities became more systematic and formal, it still did not address the university community's concerns about increased government intervention, demands for accountability, and criticisms of inequity, unpredictability and disincentives to private philanthropy.¹⁸⁴ The budget review process became increasingly complex and time-consuming. The institutions involved were less trustful of each other, more suspicious of their respective intentions and ever more competitive with respect to the acquisition of provincial operating grants.

In 1966, the Federal government ended its practice of providing grants to universities directly, except in the area of research assistance, and began flowing federal funding for universities through the provincial governments.¹⁸⁵ In 1967-68, the government of Ontario adopted a formulaic approach to fund universities based on the enrolment level in each institution and weighted according to the program in which students were enrolled. Over the years, the formula has been modified on numerous occasions, but the formulaic approach to university financing, based as it was on enrolments in programs of varying weights, would provide the foundation for government's influence over the behaviour of Ontario universities in the absence of an overall policy framework and plan for the universities to develop as a provincial system.

What the remainder of this chapter and the next will demonstrate is that the balance between system coordination and planning and an appropriate degree of institutional autonomy has been a point of discussion by both governments and universities throughout the past 50

184. Alexander L. Darling, *et al.*, "Autonomy and Control: A University Funding Formula as an Instrument of Public Policy", mimeograph, p. 18. A revised version of a paper which appeared in *Higher Education*, Vol. 18, 1989, No.5.

185. Charles Hanly, *Who Pays?: University Financing in Ontario*, Toronto: James Lewis and Samuel, 1970, p. 15.

years. During this time, there has been an array of policies, instruments and practices recommended by successive bodies to facilitate greater coordination and planning. Nevertheless, the Provincial government has been reluctant to become too involved with coordination and planning of the university sector even though universities themselves have not demonstrated a collective capacity for system coordination and planning.

3.2.1 *An Emerging Provincial Role in Coordination and Planning*

During the 1950s, the expansion of the number of universities in Ontario from six to 12 and the increase in Provincial grants to universities from \$9 million to \$36 million was achieved through a series of independent steps taken by the government after negotiation with individual institutions and community groups seeking to establish a university in their community.¹⁸⁶ Universities had not been a priority for the Ontario government to that point and in fact, there had been no Department of Education officials assigned on a full-time basis to university matters until 1951. The extensive autonomy and academic freedom which the universities enjoyed had less to do with public policy, than the fact that the government's actions pursuant to the Flavelle Commission in 1906 and the 1921 Commission on University Finances were deemed to have resolved the issues of institutional governance, administration and finance which had plagued Ontario government-university relations since the establishment of Upper Canada. As Axelrod notes:

...if, by 1950, the universities had secured institutional autonomy, it was more for the reason of benign government neglect than active government respect for the principle of academic freedom. While mostly ignoring the activities of the universities, on at least two occasions provincial premiers publicly rebuked

186. Robin Harris, "Ontario and its Universities", *The House that Ryerson Built: Essays in Education to Mark Ontario's Bicentennial*, (Hugh Oliver, Mark Holmes, Ian Winchester, (Eds.)), Toronto: OISE Press, 1984, p. 154.

University of Toronto professors who were considered either subversive or disloyal. Such incidents, however, were the exception, not the rule.¹⁸⁷

From 1951 to 1958 the government had a part-time advisor on university affairs relieving the Ministers of the Crown from the review and evaluation of the budgeting and financing needs of the universities. This appointment marked an important change in the *ad hoc* way the government had previously dealt with university affairs. The first such advisor was R.C. Wallace, retired Principal of Queen's University. In addition to the assistance Wallace provided to William Dunlop, then Minister of Education, Wallace was also assigned responsibilities by the Premier, Leslie Frost. As Axelrod notes, the issue of university coordination was clearly on the Premier's mind:

In 1952...Frost asked him [Wallace] "to have a conference with you [Dunlop] to see what can be done to obviate any unnecessary duplication in university work in the Universities in Ontario. He [Frost] is concerned that there not be an expansion which would necessitate new support from the Government if that expansion does not seem to be necessary and if the work is already taken care of in a sister institution".¹⁸⁸

Wallace's research into the status and future requirements of university departments and professions revealed that the universities were not coordinating program development among themselves, noting "there has been only limited contact and exchange of ideas between university authorities in Ontario."¹⁸⁹ However, he concluded that the university facilities were "adequate at the present time" although there "may not be adequate funds to meet their needs in the future."¹⁹⁰ Consistent with the assumption that universities were responsible for the

187. Paul Axelrod, *Scholars and Dollars: Politics, Economic and the Universities of Ontario 1945-1980*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982, p. 78. Axelrod indicates that the two professors who were publicly condemned by Premier Mitch Hepburn for alleged anti-war statements in 1939 were George Grube and Frank Underhill.

188. Axelrod, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

189. *Ibid.*

190. *Ibid.*, p. 83.

planning of academic programs and facilities, government's response in the form of financial support for expansion would be dictated, not by its independent analysis of which programs should be offered, but rather by its perception of the societal need for additional programs, and the degree of duplication involved. The arm's-length relationship of government in respect to university program offerings would eventually be respected, with little variation, by all future Ontario governments.

In 1953, Wallace undertook a second report, this one documenting the history of provincial university support since 1921. In addition to illustrating the frugal provincial support to universities during that period, he noted that the Royal Commission on University Finances' recommendation that universities be required to seek government approval prior to the erection of new buildings had "not been followed to the letter." Axelrod's analysis of this institutional behaviour illustrates the high degree of autonomy tolerated by the Ontario government:

Over the years, the universities had certainly informed the government of their expansion plans, but because the practice of university autonomy was so deeply entrenched in the province, 'when a decision has been reached as to the financial assistance that can be given, the use of the funds voted is left entirely to the discretion of the university authorities.' In this way, the province's planning capacity was further circumscribed by the independent authority of the universities. At best, the government could exert pressure on the universities to restrict their expansion or avoid duplication in an indirect (though certainly influential) way.¹⁹¹

The practice of consulting annually with the universities was continued by J.G. Althouse, who assumed the position of part-time advisor following Wallace's death in 1955. It was during Althouse's tenure that there was a recognition of the degree to which Ontario

191. *Ibid.*, p. 84.

universities were under-equipped to enrol the numbers of students expected to seek higher education projected by the Sheffield analysis, and ill-prepared to meet the educational needs of a modern industrialized economy as spelled out by the Province's 1956 submission to the Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects. In addition, neither the Department of Education nor the government possessed the administrative or policy instruments to ensure universities would endeavour to meet the emerging social and economic policy objectives of accessibility and economic competitiveness. In 1956, the universities were asked to submit their expansion plans for the ensuing five year period. Althouse then used this information as a basis for recommendations of institutional funding levels and for anticipating the institutions' future financial demands on government.

Following Althouse's death in 1956, the Minister of Education announced that the Treasurer of the Province, Dana Porter, would be Althouse's' successor as the government's advisor on university matters. Enrolment demands on the provinces' universities, and associated increases in demands for public assistance were such that a technical committee was established at that time to support Porter's work in evaluating the future needs of the universities and recommending a suitable provincial funding policy. This technical committee was composed of the Chief Director of Education, C.F. Cannon, the Deputy Minister of Economics, George Gathercole, the Comptroller of Finances from the Treasury Department, H.H. Walker, and other senior civil servants.¹⁹² The committee quickly set to work analysing the expansion plans of each university, which were expansive. Despite the ambitious nature of the individual institution's plans for expansion, the government was advised that while

192. Statement by the Honourable John P. Roberts, Thursday March 21, 1963, p. 1.

“...anticipated enrolment pressures could be accommodated to 1960, they would not do so by 1965”.¹⁹³

In 1958, the technical committee of senior government personnel was formalized by the Premier into a part-time Provincial advisory committee called the University Committee¹⁹⁴ with Cannon as the chair, Gathercole and Walker, and a new member, H.H. Cotnam, the Provincial Auditor. Its terms of reference were “to give advice on the establishment and reorganization of post-secondary institutions, as well as to review the expenditures of Ontario’s universities.”¹⁹⁵ It was the first instrument through which the Provincial government implemented “line-by-line” budgeting.¹⁹⁶ The Committee spent the bulk of its time evaluating institutional funding requests and preparing recommendations for the annual estimates process.

In December 1960, the University Committee was significantly restructured in order to bring in advice from outside the civil service. The committee was reorganized as the Advisory Committee on University Affairs (ACUA) and membership expanded to include persons from outside government. The Chief Justice of Ontario, the Honourable Dana Porter, was appointed as ACUA’s Chair and by 1963, membership included the Honourable Leslie Frost who had replaced the Minister of Education, John Robarts, when Robarts became Premier in 1961, Senator D’Arcy Leonard, Floyd Chalmers of Maclean-Hunter Publishing, R. W. Mitchell, an executive with Supertest Petroleum Corporation and George Gathercole who

193. Axelrod, *op cit.*, p. 88.

194. Committee on University Affairs, *Report of the Committee on University Affairs of Ontario 1972-73, 1973-74*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, 1974, p. 9.

195. *Ibid.*

196. *Ibid.*

had previously served on the technical committee.¹⁹⁷ Support to the Committee was provided by Ministry personnel, E.E. Stewart and John McCarthy, a Superintendent in the Department of Education. Further, the Committee was provided access to the “ Ontario College of Education...the research arm of the Department of Education.”¹⁹⁸

The Committee’s terms of reference were “...to study all matters concerning the establishment, development, operation, expansion and financing of universities in Ontario and to make recommendations thereon for the information and advise of the Government.”¹⁹⁹ So, in this way, the advisory committee to the Minister of Education began to play a role in orchestrating the provincial response to the anticipated massive enrolment growth. Yet, ACUA, with all its responsibilities for coordinating and planning apparent from its mandate, was working in a policy field without a policy framework or policy objectives identified for them by the government. On top of this, institutional planning was relatively unsophisticated, and what data institutions did have were jealously guarded on grounds of institutional autonomy and out of the desire to prevent distribution to “competitor” institutions. Further, the data provided to the government were to be treated in a strictly confidential manner. It continued the practice of “line-by-line” review of university budgets but in view of the scant data available, comparative assessments of institutional need were impossible. As Axelrod concludes:

the role of the committee...was seriously limited. It saw itself not as an instigator of policy but as a respondent, on behalf of the province, to initiatives taken by the universities themselves. With no objective formula for the

197. The Honourable John P. Robarts, Prime Minister of Ontario, Statement Delivered in the Ontario Legislature, Thursday March 21, 1963, p. 2.

198. *Ibid.*

199. *Ibid.*

distribution of grants, it functioned on a piecemeal basis. Yet despite its obvious weaknesses, it was still the best forum at the government's disposal for evaluating university needs, and its financial recommendations were followed closely during its tenure.²⁰⁰

University-government relations were transformed by the recognition that the traditional responsibilities of the universities for the preservation, augmentation, communication and transmission of the world's intellectual and cultural heritage were being augmented by social responsibilities defined largely by the state: meeting the needs of the modern state for graduates, especially in fields deemed essential to the prosperity and security of society, to make higher education available to all who were qualified and who sought it, and to achieve this efficiently, with due recognition of the public funds involved in its achievement. Having identified a need for planning and coordination of university development that went beyond purely financial considerations, the government looked to the universities collectively to address the issue.

3.2.2 *System Planning and the Creation of a University Collectivity*

In March of 1962, ACUA invited the presidents of the then ten provincially-supported universities to meet and consider a joint planning effort with the committee. Axelrod suggested that in this way "what...the committee had succeeded in doing was to turn the responsibility of planning back to the universities themselves."²⁰¹ University presidents were quick to take up the challenge of jointly planning for the growth of Ontario universities. A report, prepared by a sub-committee of the Committee of Presidents of Provincially-assisted

200. Axelrod, *op cit.*, p. 91.

201. *Ibid.*, p. 93.

Universities of Ontario,²⁰² chaired by John Deutsch, Vice-Principal of Queen's University, entitled *Post-Secondary Education in Ontario, 1962-1970*, was submitted to the government in the spring of 1962. Known as the Deutsch Report, it effectively became the guide to the planned expansion of the Ontario university system throughout the 1960s.

In developing its advice, the Committee of Presidents' sub-committee worked from the following fundamental assumptions:

- ...it is not possible to foresee with certainty the shape of things to come; therefore any system that is devised must be flexible, amenable to modification in the light of unexpected developments.
- ...the burden of expense will inevitably be great; therefore any system that is devised must observe the utmost economy, in both capital and maintenance costs, that is compatible with its successful operation.
- ...our theories of what is ideally desirable must be subject to practical considerations of speed.
- ...the quality of education must be maintained; to debase academic standards would be to break faith with the young people, to leave them ill-prepared for the world they will live in, and to endanger the social, economic and intellectual health of the Province.²⁰³

The Deutsch Report observed that enrolment in Ontario universities had increased by 67% since 1955-56, noting in particular a 123% increase in enrolments in Arts and Science (from 7,775 to 17,351) and a doubling of graduate enrolment (from 1,452 to 2,903).²⁰⁴ In spite of this, the Report recorded a situation of acute scarcity of university graduates, particularly with respect to high-school teachers of math, science and the humanities, highly trained

202. The Committee of Presidents of the Provincially-assisted Universities of Ontario, the predecessor of the Council of Ontario Universities, was formally established in December 1962. Claude T. Bissell was the Chairman of the Committee of Presidents at that time.

203. Committee of Presidents of Provincially Assisted Universities, *Post-Secondary Education in Ontario 1962-1970: Report of the Presidents of the Universities of Ontario to the Advisory Committee on University Affairs*, May 1962, Revised January, 1963, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963, p. 3.

204. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

scientists, health science professionals and technologists, engineers, engineering technologists, social workers, and physical and health educationalists.

Using projections prepared in January 1962 by R. W. B. Jackson of the Ontario College of Education, which suggested that university enrolments would increase from 32,205 in 1961-62 to a projected level of 94,200 in 1971-72, the Deutsch report reflects the “state of emergency” which the universities and government perceived to exist.

Universities were clearly willing to take up the enrolment challenges facing the Province, but there was a *quid pro quo*. As the report indicates:

The committee found a general willingness on the part of the universities to stretch their enrolment to the utmost if this were required in the public interest - and, of course, if the financial resources were available...and it was emphasized that their acceptance of this further larger increase of enrolment would be contingent upon immediate, adequate and sustained financial support for both capital and operating purposes. It would be necessary for the universities to be given an immediate undertaking of long-term support.²⁰⁵

The report made a strong case for the establishment of new institutions through affiliation with the existing universities, noting that: “Affiliation, developing into independence, has been the general pattern of university formation throughout the British Commonwealth”²⁰⁶ and that such institutions could eventually become independent. The strongest arguments were, however, reserved for the expansion of graduate programming:

...we recommend a “crash programme” in graduate studies, a virtual doubling of the graduate school enrolment in Ontario universities within the next few years. ...We recommend ...that a special per capita grant per graduate student be allocated to the universities operating graduate programmes... *We regard this as the first and most essential action of all those that must be taken to meet the approaching emergency.* [emphasis provided]²⁰⁷

205. *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

206. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

207. *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

The Committee was convinced that an increase in the number of graduate students was essential “for the sake of the entire economic and social order.” Home-grown graduate students, would, in the Committee’s view, translate into the future faculty who would be required to teach the tidal wave of undergraduates soon to besiege the institutions.

Noting the complex and important implications of postsecondary education for government - a radical shift from the benign neglect the universities had experienced in the previous 30 year period - the Presidents advocated a “more co-ordinated administrative structure” to guide university - government relations. At the time, financial responsibility for postsecondary education was divided among at least six different government departments (Education, Health, Labour, Agriculture, Mines, and Lands and Forests) and the Advisory Committee on University Affairs. Citing a need for better co-ordination of education activities, yet unwilling to give government direct control of higher education (a situation, they noted, “that runs counter to the whole tradition of higher education in the English-speaking world”), the Presidents sought a scheme that would facilitate coordination without imposing direct government control. The solution, they argued, lay within a reconstituted Advisory Committee on University Affairs, strengthened by the appointment of a full-time Executive Secretary and a small full-time research and clerical staff, and the establishment of at least one sub-committee composed of persons with specialized knowledge, to whom the Committee could turn for detailed studies of intricate problems. Further, the Deutsch report advocated wider representation of academic views through the appointment of retired faculty to ACUA.²⁰⁸

One of the sub-committees recommended would be composed of Ontario university

208. *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24.

presidents, a group which would eventually evolve into what is now the Council of Ontario Universities. The Presidents' rationale was linked to facilitating system-wide coordination:

There will be more occasions in the future when collective action on the part of the universities is necessary, and more activities in which liaison and co-ordination of effort among the universities will be essential; the presidents should have a formally constituted body, along the lines of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals in the United Kingdom. This body would not in any way usurp the functions of the Advisory Committee; it would be a consultative group, whose existence would facilitate the work of the Advisory Committee.²⁰⁹

Implications of the universities' increasing reliance on government funds for an ever greater proportion of operating and capital costs were not lost on the Presidents.²¹⁰ A substantial section of the preface to their discussion of financing contained a statement on academic freedom and a subtle warning to government that institutional autonomy was non-negotiable, regardless of the level of public financing universities received.²¹¹

At the present time the universities are being asked to recognize their public responsibilities and to make university education available to very large numbers of students. Without money, they will be unable to take in more students. Without freedom, what they make available to the students will not be university education.²¹²

In the context of such a division of responsibilities, the Deutsch report recommended that academic program duplication should be avoided in program areas outside those integral to basic scientific or humanistic education²¹³ and that the task of working out areas of institutional specialization, and coordination of new and existing program offerings should be

209. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

210. *Ibid.*, p. 25. The Presidents argued that the only alternative "major source of funds, apart from governments, is fees." While noting it would be possible to increase fees three or four times over, just as it would be possible to raise admission standards to extra-ordinary heights, and thereby keep out a substantial part of the projected increase in enrolment, "the committee cannot with a good conscience recommend either of these courses".

211. *Ibid.*, p. 25-26.

212. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

213. In the 1980s such programs would come to be known as "Core Arts and Science".

undertaken by the universities as a collectivity. Similarly, the Report recommended the establishment of an Ontario Bibliographic Centre to coordinate the ordering and cataloguing of library books for all universities. This advice, developed in just six weeks, approximated a master plan for university development in Ontario.²¹⁴

3.2.3 Planning for Growth

In the context of a major policy statement, on March 21, 1963, the Provincial government unveiled a proposal, based on the Deutsch report, to expand significantly the size and number of universities, and encourage growth in graduate studies to ensure a significant pool of qualified candidates for the professoriate. New institutions eligible for provincial funding could be developed at the initiative of a particular community, with government support, or through the secularization of existing denominational institutions. Almost all of the major recommendations of the Deutsch Report were implemented, including the creation of new universities (Trent [1963], Brock [1964]), the establishment of satellite campuses in the eastern and western suburbs of Metropolitan Toronto (Scarborough [1965] and Erindale [1967] campuses of the University of Toronto), additional funds for the expansion of graduate programs and associated library, teaching and research resources, and the introduction of an Ontario graduate fellowship program (1963-64) for graduate students intending to pursue a university teaching career. In 1963 universities were given three-year funding commitments by the government with respect to capital financing. One suggestion that was not adopted to

214. The Committee also made recommendations regarding the establishment of additional "technological institutes." On this issue, see also a subsequent report by the Committee of Presidents of Provincially Assisted Universities and Colleges of Ontario, entitled *The Structure of Post-Secondary Education in Ontario*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, June 1963, pp. 24-25.

increase access for the 1965-66 secondary school graduates was that of the temporary establishment of a distance education institution called “Ontario College”- a large liberal arts college established through the cooperation of all the existing universities. Instruction in the various subjects leading to a BA degree would have been televised from a central location.

The March 21, 1963 policy statement, however, was much more than just a public response to the Deutsch report. This policy statement by Premier John Robarts enunciated a provincial position with respect to universities on a wide range of issues, providing parameters for the public policy framework for universities, much of which would persist over five subsequent premiers, three political parties, and three and a half decades.

3.2.4 The Robarts Policy Statement on Universities in Ontario: March 21, 1963

Observers of university-government relations in Ontario would be hard pressed to identify a more bold initiative in the history of its universities in the 20th century than that taken by the Province in the 1960s which gave rise to confirming the expansion of “the university family” to 18 institutions by September 1965 and a three-fold expansion in student enrolment levels over a ten year period. Riding on the crest of public sentiment that supported broad accessibility to universities for Ontario’s youth, and confidence that Ontario’s institutions of higher learning would add to the productive capacity of the Province, Premier John Robarts delivered a major statement on university policy, reaffirming a number of longstanding policies and articulating a number of new policy principles.

Robarts reaffirmed that a public university system existed for the common benefit and confirmed that “the provincial university” was defined as “that type of university which is non-denominational”:

The province does not contribute by way of grants to any denominational college or university... [D]enominational institutions which do not desire to follow the examples above are under no compulsion to do so. Any denomination may operate and control and, of course, pay for its own institution. ...Any departure from this policy would...undermine and endanger our great university federation. This, I feel, should be firmly understood.”²¹⁵

He reaffirmed the independence of universities from government, and yet in the same breath, enunciated a policy with respect to university admission standards:

...the government does not look with approval on any university requiring unreasonably high standards of admission. It is our viewpoint that the admission standards should be moderate and reasonable and such as to enable the average student to proceed to a degree...a flexible standard between 55 and 60 percent, depending on the type of course, would define what I mean by “the average student.”²¹⁶

On the development of the additional universities he concluded:

...we should not dilute our strength by increasing the number of our universities unnecessarily. ...our present plans, as I have set out, call for sufficient universities to meet our needs for, say, the next 15 years...This would not preclude the formation of arts and other colleges, but if such are undertaken, they should be affiliated with one of our existing, well-established institutions. Otherwise, as I say, we risk the grave possibility of diluting our financial efforts.²¹⁷

Premier Robarts’s statement added incrementally to the government’s growing commitment to a policy of broad accessibility. The first indication of the magnitude of access the government expected institutions to provide had occurred in 1959 when the Provincial Treasurer, the Honourable James N. Allen declared: “...our objective is to ensure that no student who has the capacity will be deprived of the opportunity of attending university and

215. Statement by the Honourable John P. Robarts, Prime Minister of Ontario, Delivered in the Ontario Legislature, Thursday March 21, 1963, pp. 4-5 and 8.

216. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

217. The Honourable John P. Robarts, *Legislature of Ontario Debates/ Hansard*, Toronto: Government of Ontario, March 21, 1963, p. 2009.

developing his talents to the fullest possible extent.”²¹⁸ Eleven months later, in January of 1960, Lieutenant Governor J.K. MacKay in delivering the speech from the Throne, stated “...every student of ability and ambition who wishes to proceed to university will have the opportunity”²¹⁹ regardless of financial means. The government’s position was fleshed out even more fully by Robarts’s statement in 1963 on admissions, where he indicated that there was to be room for all who wish to proceed to some form of higher education, although perhaps not in the program of choice. In 1965, John Robarts reiterated his government’s commitment to universal accessibility:

We must provide whatever opportunities are necessary as a government so that each individual may be assured an opportunity through education to develop his potentialities to the fullest degree and to employ his talents that God has given him to the greatest advantage. We plan to accomplish this through free choice, not through coercion and regimentation of our fellow citizens.²²⁰

The government’s positions on matters of institutional expansion and admission standards, however, were not conceived in the context of detailed expectations for institutional development, differentiation and monitoring or accountability such as might be found in a system master plan. The expansion proposal and admission policies appeared to be driven most directly by anticipated levels of student demand.

Universities were acutely aware of the government’s accessibility objectives but were “not always clear on how to apply the principle,”²²¹ particularly with respect to professional

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218. Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations, “The Evolution of University Access Policies in Ontario”, *OCUFA Forum*, October 1988, p. 1 and The Honourable Bette Stephenson, Minister of Education and Colleges and Universities, *Legislature of Ontario Debates/ Hansard*, December 15, 1983, p. 4185.
219. Lieutenant Governor for Ontario, J.K. MacKay, “Speech From the Throne to the Legislature of Ontario”, *Legislature of Ontario Debates/ Hansard*, January 26, 1960, p. 6.
220. Premier John P. Robarts, *Legislature of Ontario Debates/ Hansard*, February 23, 1965, p. 725.
221. Council of Ontario Universities, “Numbers in the Clouds: A Discussion of Enrolment Problems for the 1980’s by the Long-Range Planning Committee”, July 15, 1980, p. 4.

programs with restricted intake reflective of employment opportunities, programs with expensive physical facilities such as laboratories, and institutional variations in the definition of a “qualified applicant”. Without further direction from government, accessibility levels were left to market forces, as the universities themselves noted: “The level of demand, and indeed the particular university’s financial needs, combine to set the effective standard of accessibility variously in different universities and campuses.”²²² While quite general in nature, the three objectives underlying provincial policy for universities were on the table - economic development, provision of equality of opportunity and general cultural development. Yet, the government still lacked a recipe for system-level coordination and a key ingredient for decision support - reliable data. The lack of data and the unreliability of enrolment forecasts and manpower planning efforts were destined to plague higher education policy development in Ontario on an ongoing basis. For example, a subsequent report by the Committee of Presidents in June 1963 noted that the enrolment projections used in their previous report were in fact lower than actual enrolments for 1962-63. Actual enrolments exceeded the projection by over 500 students suggesting the estimates of student demand were more likely to be too low than too high.²²³

Increasing government interest in universities was reflected in the subsequent establishment in 1964 of a free-standing Department of University Affairs, under the direction of the Honourable William Davis, who was also the Minister of Education. In introducing legislation establishing the new department, Premier John Robarts made clear the underlying

222. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

223. Committee of Presidents of Provincially Assisted Universities and Colleges of Ontario, *The Structure of Post-Secondary Education in Ontario*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, June 1963, p. 17.

objectives of enhanced planning and system-level efficiencies:

The new department will administer all provincial grants paid to the universities and will maintain a constant scrutiny of the procedures and administrative methods by which this is carried out so that necessary changes in approach can be made when they are required... Procedures will be developed to allow detailed discussion between officials of the department and each university regarding proposed building plans on an individual and year-round basis.... [The Department] will work with the university officials in developing sound plans for the coordination of future expansion in the various faculties, schools and courses. In this way we will be able to eliminate unnecessary duplication of facilities and at the same time we will be able to ensure that no particular area of need is left without provision or no area of education is left undeveloped. We hope, too, that we can develop programs of cooperation in the purchase and use of various teaching materials and equipment and in this way we can spread the benefits further and, at the same time, also spread the cost on a more realistic basis.²²⁴

At the same time, the government's advisory committee was expanded and reorganized in response to the universities' demand for an intermediary body that had academic representation to sit between them and the government. A new Committee on University Affairs (CUA) was established by Order-in-Council in 1964 "to study matters concerning the establishment, development, operation, expansion and financing of universities in Ontario and to make recommendations thereon to the Minister of University Affairs for the information and advice of the Government."²²⁵ It was composed of an almost equal number of senior government civil servants, and members originating from universities - the latter in response to a persistent campaign by the institutions for academic representation on ACUA.²²⁶ CUA's

224. *The Learning Society, Report of the Commission on Post-Secondary Education in Ontario*. Toronto: Queen's Printer. 1972, pp. 106-107, citing the Honourable John P. Robarts, *Legislature of Ontario Debates*, April 22, 1964, pp. 2334-35.

225. Committee on University Affairs, *Report of the Committee on University Affairs 1967*, Toronto: Queen's Printer, December 31, 1967. p. 5.

226. In 1967, the Committee included Dr. Douglas T. Wright (Chairman); Dr. M. Elizabeth Arthur, Professor of History, Lakehead University; Dr. Arthur N. Bourns, Professor Of Chemistry and Vice-president (Science), McMaster University; The Honourable Leslie M. Frost, P.C., Q.C.; Dr. George E. Gathercole, Chairman, The Hydro-Electric Power Commission of Ontario; Dr. Reva Gerstein; Mr. James O'N. Hughes, President and Chairman, A.E. Ames and Company Limited; Dr. Maurice J. Lavigne, Manager Physical Metallurgy Department, Falconbridge Nickel

first chair, the Honourable Dana Porter, filled the position on a part-time basis. On his death in 1967, Douglas T. Wright, former Dean of Engineering at the University of Waterloo, assumed the position on a full-time basis.

One of the Ontario government's most pressing concerns during the mid 1960s was the expansion of graduate programs. Despite widespread demand for graduate program expansion, there was growing concern with the associated costs and the development of premature or unduly expensive research initiatives.²²⁷ The perception that universities were not able to provide graduate education to ever-increasing numbers of students within the bounds of reasonable cost was gaining credibility, and concern intensified after the Bladen Commission report had suggested that the relative cost of educating a Ph.D. student was five times more than the cost of educating an undergraduate student.²²⁸

The growing public costs associated with the development of graduate programs during this period brought into question the prevailing practice of requiring very limited accountability of the publicly-funded universities and spawned substantial reconsideration of the appropriate degree of university autonomy *vis-à-vis* the public interest in university matters. Public support for institutional autonomy waned. In Ontario, the new Minister of

Mines Limited; Mr. Robert W. Mitchell, Q.C., Vice-President, Supertest Petroleum Corporation Limited; Dr. Roger J. Rossiter, Professor Biochemistry, Dean of Graduate Studies, The University of Western Ontario; and Dr. David W. Slater, Professor of Economics, Dean of Graduate Studies (designate), Queen's University.

Original members of CUA who had served terms beginning in 1965 included Dr. Floyd S. Chalmers, and the Honourable T. D'Arcy Leonard both members of the earlier ACUA and both retired. Dr. J.A. MacFarlane and the Honourable Dana Porter passed away in 1966 and 1967 respectively, and Dr. K. W. Taylor retired from CUA in 1967 after serving a three year term.

227. J.W.T. Spinks, *et. al.*, *Report to the Committee on University Affairs and the Committee of Presidents of Provincially-assisted Universities of the Commission to Study the Development of Graduate Programmes in Ontario Universities*, Toronto: The Commission, 1966, p. 22.
228. *Financing Higher Education in Canada Being the Report of A Commission to the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada*, Chairman: Vincent W. Bladen. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965, p. 51 and p. 70. For a summary of the formula proposed by Bladen to weight students, see Stenton's discussion of "federal grant units" pp. 92-93.

University Affairs soon "served notice that his government was no longer content to allow respect for academic freedom and institutional autonomy either to dictate or to frustrate public policy objectives".²²⁹

As noted by Percy Smith, the recognition of the need for planning and for instruments of planning was met with a "bland refusal on the part of the universities to act on the recognition".²³⁰ The Commission on Financing Higher Education in Canada (Bladen Commission 1965), sponsored by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, had specifically recommended that the planning of higher education be an activity shared by universities and governments and that governments should provide leadership with respect to financial needs. In this regard, its recommendation to provincial governments had been:

That they adopt some method of determining university operating and capital grants as will permit more rational forward planning by the universities. Specifically we recommend that all provinces that have not as yet established a "Grants Commission" do so: and that in all such Commissions there be strong academic representation. The function of the Commission would be to advise the government on the aggregate needs of the universities, capital and operating, and to divide among the universities the total amount in fact voted by the province.²³¹

The observations of the Committee on Higher Education in Great Britain, under the Chairmanship of Lord Robbins, were also influential with respect to the Ontario government's position regarding the appropriate balance between university autonomy and government intervention. The Robbins *Report of the Committee on Higher Education* suggested that:

It is when development policy and programmes are considered that the greatest difficulties arise. Undoubtedly it is good that academic institutions should have the liberty to determine their own programmes and policy... But

229. Cameron, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

230. Percy Smith, *op. cit.*, 1984, p. 574. Percy Smith was a former Vice-President, Academic, University of Guelph.

231. *Ibid.*, citing Bladen, 1965, p. 69.

it is unlikely that separate consideration by independent institutions of their own affairs in their own circumstances will always result in a pattern that is comprehensive and appropriate in relation to the needs of society and the demands of the national economy. There is no guarantee of the emergence of any coherent policy. And this being so, it is not unreasonable to expect that the Government, which is the source of finance, should be content with an absence of coordination or should be without influence thereon.²³²

In delivering the Frank Gerstein Lecture at York University in 1966, the Honourable William G. Davis, the new Minister of University Affairs, echoed these sentiments and clearly illustrated the dilemma which the government faced in the early 1960's in trying to find a balance between public accountability and university autonomy. The Minister stated:

In so far as I can ascertain, the degree of autonomy enjoyed by the provincially assisted universities of Ontario is equivalent to, if not greater than, that known by publicly supported universities anywhere - including the United Kingdom. There is, moreover, much evidence to indicate that provided the universities can meet the responsibilities of our times we should undoubtedly be better off if they were allowed to continue to operate with such autonomy. On the other hand, if they cannot or will not accept those responsibilities, and if, for example, large numbers of able students must be turned away because the university is not prepared to accept them, or if, as another example, some of the less glamorous disciplines are ignored, despite pressing demands for graduates in those areas, or if costly duplication of effort is evident, I cannot imagine that any society, especially one bearing large expense for higher education, will want to stand idly by. For there will inevitably be a demand - there have been indications of this in other jurisdictions - that government move in and take over. In saying this I am not attempting to act as an alarmist or to use alarmist tactics, but it is important that we realize what the possibilities are. I have already stressed that I am in favour of free and independent universities, but this belief will not take away the question as to whether our institutions of higher learning can meet the challenge. Only our universities will be able to answer that.²³³

As previously noted, in 1966 the Federal government made a policy change replacing direct funding to institutions and students with transfer payments paid directly to the provincial

232. *Report of the Committee on Higher Education*, Chairman: Lord Robbins, London: The Committee, 1963, p. 233.

233. William G. Davis, "The Government of Ontario and the Universities of the Province", *Governments and the University*, Toronto: York University, 1966, p. 33.

governments at the rate of 50 per cent of all federally recognized operating costs of post-secondary education incurred by the provinces. As the 1972 Report of the Commission on Post-Secondary Education in Ontario noted:

...the dramatic effect of the new fiscal arrangements after 1966 was quickly to "provincialize" post-secondary education across Canada. It led to the emergence of ten quite separate provincial systems. It implied the removal of the federal presence as a direct agent of national educational and cultural goals, and as a counterpoise to exclusive provincial influence. Aid from the federal government had come from a distance and without much control; aid that now came solely from and through the provincial government aroused fears in the institutions that proximity to the controlling authority threatened powerful supervision...in Ontario. ...[T]he problematic and changing links between government and post-secondary institutions are being forged mainly within the jurisdiction of the Province.²³⁴

In response to provincial concerns for coordination and planning in the development of the graduate enterprise, a commission was struck to recommend to the government a means of ensuring greater graduate program rationalization. While the provincial commission on graduate program coordination was at work, a national commission on university government in Canada made a contribution to the discussion of university - government relations and in particular provided a context for deliberations of the nature of an appropriate structure for system governance and the need for master planning.

3.2.5 *University Government in Canada, 1965* (*Duff-Berdahl Commission*)

At the national level, in mid-1962, the Canadian Association of University Teachers and the National Conference of Canadian Universities and Colleges (soon thereafter renamed the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC)) jointly commissioned

234. *The Learning Society: Report of the Commission on Post-Secondary Education in Ontario, op. cit.*, p. 14.

a dispassionate examination and evaluation of the present structure and practices of the government of both the English- and French-language universities of Canada, including provincial, church-related and independent institutions.²³⁵

Commissioners Sir James Duff, retired Vice-Chancellor of the University of Durham²³⁶ and Robert O. Berdahl, an American political scientist and scholar of British university-government relations from San Francisco State College, were supported by a steering committee composed of Claude Bissell (Chair and President of the University of Toronto), Edward Sheffield from AUCC, and professors Bora Laskin and Jacques St.-Pierre with J. Percy Smith (Secretary) from CAUT.

At the time, the university community was concerned with the declining role of the academic perspective in institutional management decisions. The thrust of the Commission's recommendations involved modifications to the existing bicameral framework for governance, stressing the value of shared responsibility for university governance and involving Senates more directly in budgeting and planning exercises as well as adding student representatives to university Senates. Correspondingly, Boards were advised to take a more critical look at educational proposals of the Senate.²³⁷ In addition, the Commissioners, following as they were on the heels of the release of the first volume of the Parent Commission (Report of the Royal Commission of Enquiry on Education in the Province of Quebec) in 1963, which had recommended a central role for the provincial government in ensuring "central planning and

235. *University Government in Canada: Report of a Commission sponsored by the Canadian Association of University Teachers and the Association of University Teachers and the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966, p. 3. The commission was financed by a grant from the Ford Foundation.

236. The original commissioners were appointed in November 1963. The senior Commissioner, Sir James Mountford, was subsequently compelled to resign for reasons of health and was replaced in July 1964 by Sir James Duff.

237. *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27.

coordination for a decentralized institutional delivery system...” and which was followed-up by provincial legislation in which the central principle was provincial planning and coordination,²³⁸ devoted a chapter in their report to the relationship between universities and provincial governments. The Commission’s discussion injected practicality, rationality and context into the heated debate surrounding the appropriateness of any given degree of government influence over university decision making. At the outset, the Commissioners drew a distinction between government’s role *vis-à-vis* university autonomy and its role *vis-à-vis* academic freedom, noting: “The two concepts are not synonymous, and the former must not be stretched so far as to rule out the government’s need to ensure a policy of co-ordination among universities.”²³⁹ In the Commissioners’ view, the public interest justified an increasing role for governments in coordinating higher education:

Provincial governments, charged with pursuing the public interest and asked to supply increasing proportions of university income, will legitimately want to be consulted on the development of higher education in their jurisdictions.²⁴⁰

Concluding that universities must coordinate their response to public need in a way that preserves quality while rationalizing program availability, the Commissioners observed: “The question, then, really is no longer whether or not to have co-ordination, but rather who will supply it and on the basis of what criteria.”²⁴¹

The universities were admonished for not having precluded the need for provincial intervention through the introduction of voluntary coordination measures. The Commissioners noted:

238. David Cameron, *More Than an Academic Question*, *op cit.*, pp. 105-106.

239. *University Government in Canada...*, *op cit.*, p. 72.

240. *Ibid.*, p. 73.

241. *Ibid.*

...although some responsible university leaders recognized this need, university presidents who were “winning” under the old rules were understandably reluctant to change, and thus self co-ordination among the universities became a serious goal only after provincial governments threatened to impose co-ordination on their own terms.²⁴²

The Commission recommended that the universities of each province should have their own coordinating organization with a full time Executive Director “of a substantial nature” and a small independent research staff, all of which would be financed by the participating universities. Although the body they envisioned would have no binding power over its member institutions or over government policy, it was considered essential since “...the universities’ best hope for maintaining maximum independence of governmental control lies in their ability to take united stands on issues, based on careful and objective studies.”²⁴³ If such an organization were to survive as an effective mechanism of coordination, government, for its part, would be required to refuse to entertain any private arrangements with universities on matters that have been collectively studied and other university presidents “should not acquiesce in this buccaneering... This is more difficult to do when the offenders are powerful, but the rules have to be uniform for everyone or they will lose their effectiveness.”²⁴⁴

Each province, the Commission advised, should establish a provincial advisory committee to determine the level of government grants, evaluate provincial needs in higher education and reconcile conflicting recommendations from presidents and faculty groups when the need arises. Such advisory bodies should also be responsible for supervising the development of province-wide long-term planning. Specifically, the Commissioner’s

242. *Ibid.*, p. 74.

243. *Ibid.*, p. 75.

244. *Ibid.*, p. 76.

recommended:

- Each province should undertake a long-range Master Plan for the development of its higher education over the next decade with the joint participation of university governing boards, administrators and faculty to provide an opportunity to facilitate the development of a province-wide consensus on the directions for future development;
- Provincial advisory coordinating committees should be structured in such a way that they can become the middle ground where government and university needs can be dealt with sympathetically and ultimately reconciled. Preferably, there would be a slight majority of the members drawn from the academic ranks, excluding administrators or board members, so as to have members who were freer to subordinate the interests of their universities to overriding public needs.²⁴⁵ Non-university members would ideally be “interested private citizens of some stature rather than active political figures or career civil servants.”
- Advisory coordinating committees should have “a research staff intimately familiar with the unique issues posed by higher education”, preferably housed in a Ministry or Division devoted to postsecondary affairs. The staff should work in close liaison with their counterparts within the presidents’ and faculties’ organizations and where appropriate, joint studies should be undertaken to avoid needless duplication.
- Provincial grants should be announced as early in the year as possible to provide universities with “badly needed flexibility in planning ahead.” Noting that some academics sought an automatic grant derived from a formula to, among other things, “reduce the dangers of poor judgement being shown by advisory committees” it was stressed that the establishment and periodic re-evaluation of a grant formulae “would most logically be undertaken by the provincial advisory committees...”²⁴⁶

The Commission submitted its report in August 1965 and it was made public in January 1966. Universities across Canada were quick to pick up on the participatory governing model recommended in the report. As a national perspective on a strictly provincial relationship, the Commissioners’ recommendations regarding university-government relations received little attention, although a careful comparison of the Duff-Berdahl recommendations

245. In terms of Realpolitik, the Commissioner’s also noted that “...just as we have pointed out earlier to university presidents that it is good for them, the institutions, and the faculties that the professors should play a responsible major role in the creation and maintenance of standards, so we would urge governments to recognize that academics will accept the inevitable controls and fiscal austerities with better grace if they have contributed significantly to the decision-making process. p. 80.

246. *University Government in Canada...*, *op cit.*, pp. 76 - 81.

with the structure and function of the Province of Ontario's advisory body on university matters established in 1974, the Ontario Council on University Affairs, would reveal a high degree of parallelism and suggest that this section of the report likely contributed to the deliberations in this regard.

In the next section, we turn to an examination of Ontario's attempts to manage the expansion of the university sector that had been put in motion in the post-W.W. II era. Government was beginning to face the possibility that the university sector might be overbuilt relative to actual student demand. It was also being called on by the universities to manage the interinstitutional conflict that was emerging between the older, more established universities and the newer, developing universities around the issues of the development and financing of graduate program offerings and research.

3.3 Managing Growth: The Introduction of Graduate Program Coordination and Planning

Throughout the early 1960s, the Ontario government and the Committee on University Affairs had been subject to pleas from the publicly-funded institutions for a framework for the expansion of graduate programs.²⁴⁷ The growth in graduate studies was financially supported by government;²⁴⁸ however, no direction had been provided in shaping graduate program development:

247. By 1965, fully-developed honours and graduate programs to the Ph.D. level existed in many fields at the University of Toronto, Queen's University, The University of Western Ontario and McMaster University. Institutions at which honours and graduate programs were launched, and some Ph.D. work was available or planned, included Windsor, Waterloo, Ottawa, Guelph, Carleton and York universities. The provincially-supported universities offering only undergraduate programs were Brock, Lakehead, Laurentian and Trent. See J.W.T. Spinks *et al.*, *op. cit.* pp. 22-23.

248. This included the introduction of a system of Extended Graduate Program Grants to help universities cope with the expansion of graduate programs and the Province of Ontario Graduate Fellowship Program introduced to aid graduate students who wished to pursue a career in post-secondary teaching.

Although the government encouraged and financially supported this expansion, it did not interfere with the actual process. The responsibility for the careful planning of new programs of high quality was left to the universities. University autonomy, which has always been a basic characteristic of the Ontario university system, was respected.²⁴⁹

By the mid-1960s, concern over the pattern of development in the graduate sector intensified. The almost inexhaustible demand for higher degree graduates in Ontario and in Canada, the general desire of the universities in Ontario to proceed as quickly as possible to master's programs, and the widespread desire among departments to introduce the doctoral degree, created intense competition among universities for funds. Institutions sought to enhance the probability of achieving their individual aspirations in the area of graduate programming. The older institutions argued that the financial, material and human resources required for the expansion of the graduate enterprise in Ontario made it mandatory that graduate work be restricted to a few of the larger universities. The newer institutions responded that they must immediately undertake graduate programming in order to attract the faculty required in high-quality educational institutions and to enhance their institutional prestige.²⁵⁰

Put in the position of refereeing among competing institutional aspirations, the Minister of University Affairs argued that greater coordination and planning of the university sector were required, and to achieve it the institutions must relinquish some of their traditional autonomy for the sake of the public interest. He argued institutional autonomy "...is to be desired only if the universities themselves are able and willing to assume the high degree of

249. Ontario Council on University Affairs, "The Ontario University System: A Statement of Issues", *Fifth Annual Report 1978-79*, September 1978, p. 32.

250 *Ibid.*, p. 42.

responsibility that goes with it." He continued:

Such responsibility involves an awareness that the ambitions and desires of a given institution, faculty, or department within a university may have to be tempered by the over-all requirements of society. It demands greater co-operation and coordination among universities than we have ever known before.²⁵¹

Confronted with the dual problems of explosive growth and increasing allocations of public funds, both the universities and the government recognized that a situation in which each university planned and carried out its development in accordance with its own particular needs was no longer practical. As noted earlier, the call for coordination and cooperation among the universities to make efficient use of public funds led to the establishment of a provincial commission, albeit narrowly focused on graduate program expansion. In 1966, a framework was recommended within which the development of graduate work in Ontario would be cost-efficient, of high quality, and carefully planned.

**3.3.1 *The Commission to Study the Development of Graduate Programmes in Ontario Universities, 1966*
(*Spinks Commission*)**

The Commission to Study the Development of Graduate Programmes in Ontario Universities was established in the Fall of 1965 as a result of a joint recommendation from the Committee on University Affairs and the Committee of Presidents of the Provincially-assisted Universities of Ontario. This three person commission, chaired by John W.T. Spinks,²⁵² was appointed with the following mandate:

251. Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

252. The three commissioners appointed were: Gustave O. Arlt, President of the Council of Graduate Schools in the United States; Kenneth Hare, Master of Birkbeck College, University of London; and as Chairman, John W. T. Spinks, President of the University of Saskatchewan.

To study matters concerning the quality, need, introduction and expansion of graduate education and research in Ontario and the financial support for these programmes and to make recommendations thereon to the Committee on University Affairs for the information and advice of the Committee.²⁵³

The Commission recommended that all the provincial universities should move toward fully-developed honours and master's programs in selected central disciplines, but that doctoral programs should be restricted to a smaller list of institutions where adequate funds and facilities were available. Noting the rapid rise in the cost of graduate training, the Commission stated that it was essential that the Province "equip itself with an authorization procedure for doctoral programs,"²⁵⁴ and recommended that Ontario advance doctoral programs within this planned context as quickly as possible.

The Commission further recommended greater consultation among institutions at the discipline or field level, among graduate deans and librarians, as well as between universities and government, to eliminate unnecessary program duplication and to avoid gaps in program offerings. The commissioners were not optimistic, however, about the degree of acceptance that this suggestion would enjoy:

It will not be easy to find the right formula for these consultations. At present the provincial universities tend to approach the business of mutual consultation very guardedly, and in a highly competitive frame of mind. They are suspicious that their neighbours may have designs on things they want to do themselves or are doing already. We sympathize with such defensiveness. Where resources have to be shared out in a mood of scarcity, someone must be disappointed and others may be suspected of sharp practice; but we consider such an attitude untenable. If the universities cannot devise a consultative procedure whereby they make sure that their programmes are complementary and do not involve duplication and waste, the job will have to be done by some external agency. In our view the universities should ideally, at all levels we have discussed, do their own planning and rationalization.²⁵⁵

253. J.W.T. Spinks *et al.*, *op. cit.*, p. iii.

254. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

255. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

The Commission concluded that the existing system of university governance provided no opportunity for the kind of province-wide agreement required to ensure cooperation and coordination among the universities in graduate studies and research. In the Commission's opinion:

The most striking characteristic of higher - not only graduate - education in Ontario is the complete absence of a master plan, of an educational policy, and of a co-ordinating authority for the provincially-supported institutions...[The universities] compete with each other for their share of annual appropriations, and the direction and rate of their development is determined not by rational and unified planning but by their individual ingenuity in securing funds. The ultimate - in fact, the only - control is exercised by the Government in its allocation of appropriations.²⁵⁶

The Commission recommended "drastic reform of the whole system of governance" involving the creation of a University of Ontario based on the State university model adopted in New York and California.²⁵⁷ It was the Commission's intent to have the existing universities surrender only the autonomy which permitted unrestricted competition and "ill-advised expansion". The head of the University of Ontario would be a university president who would preside over a Board of Regents. Internal coordination would be ensured by a comprehensive Academic Senate. The Commission believed that this would result in an educational establishment far greater than the sum of its parts, able to attain a level of quality none of its individual components could achieve. The report concluded:

By careful and systematic strengthening of the basic disciplines in all the universities and by developing real centres of excellence in the more specialized and esoteric fields in some or even all of them, without wasteful duplication of facilities and ruinous competition for staff, the University of Ontario can - and no doubt will - become the great prestige institution of which Canada has long dreamed but which it has never attained.²⁵⁸

256. *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78.

257. *Ibid.*, p.77.

258. *Ibid.*, p. 82.

The report was publicly released during the final week of December 1966, a time when public announcements were unlikely to receive much attention. An endorsement from the Minister of University Affairs was not forthcoming. The Honourable William G. Davis made known his "strong reservations" about the report and publicly questioned "whether the report was the best or the only answer to university problems."²⁵⁹ At the same press conference, J.A. Corry, Principal of Queen's University, and A.N. Bourns, a member of the Committee on University Affairs, both condemned the report, suggesting that it would result in undesirable bureaucratic control of universities and that the proposed reorganization of the Ontario university structure was unacceptable.

Neither the Chairman, J.W.T. Spinks, nor the other members of the Commission were invited to the press conference, despite contrary expectations. J.W.T. Spinks, quoted shortly after the report was released, said: "I hoped to be invited...the education department told us we'd be expected there."²⁶⁰ In rebuttal of the report's critics, J.W.T. Spinks maintained that his plan had been misunderstood. He argued that the proposed University of Ontario structure would have provided an academic controlling body as a bulwark against external and political interference. In an unreleased press statement written by J.W.T. Spinks (in fact its existence was not made known until January 20, 1967, almost one month after the release of the report) he indicated that the University of Ontario recommendation was developed because it

...would give the academic community an opportunity of regulating its own affairs thus reducing or eliminating the likelihood of the government imposing regulations or restrictions.²⁶¹

259. "Spinks Report Buried by its own Sponsors - Donald MacDonald", *St. Catharines Standard*, December 31, 1966.

260. "Davis Spurns Spinks Report", *The London Gazette*, January 6, 1967.

261. "That one-big-college idea still troubling Queen's Park", *The Toronto Daily Star*, January 21, 1967.

The universities, led by J. A. Corry, Principal of Queen's university, indicated that university presidents believed that the plan was "...an unnecessarily complicated solution to the problem of co-ordination of our effort."²⁶² Corry maintained that the idea of a highly centralized form of university organization was inappropriate for a province like Ontario with a history and tradition in higher education that had been marked by wide diversity in institutional origin, development and emphasis. Other university presidents decried the proposal as "irrelevant" (Western), "neither necessary nor desirable" (McMaster) and "unfeasible" (York).

Enormous negative reaction to the Spinks recommendations reinforced the value attached to the individual identities of Ontario universities, which in some cases the Legislature had only recently established as autonomous, rather than affiliated entities. Universities drew a "line-in-the-sand" with respect to what government should and should not consider doing in view of institutional autonomy. As Axelrod concluded: "Ontario had no intention of establishing the kind of direct political or administrative control over its universities that other jurisdictions had experienced, no matter how practical or economically attractive the prospect."²⁶³ Further to this point, Trotter *et al.* suggest:

The recommendation [for a Provincial University of Ontario] was rejected by the government and universities, perhaps because of an historical preference in eastern Canada for decentralization while attempting to achieve centralization as necessary in informal rather than formal ways.²⁶⁴

Although the universities and the government rejected the Commission's proposal for a University of Ontario, university presidents recognized action was required to ensure greater

262. "Ontario Rejects Spinks Plan", *Regina Leader Post*, January 16, 1967.

263. Axelrod, *op cit.*, p. 97.

264. Bernard Trotter and A.W.R. Carrothers, *Planning for Planning- Relationships between universities and governments: guidelines to process*, Ottawa: Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, 1974, pp. 34-35.

coordination in the development of graduate studies in order to stave off the potential for government intervention. On behalf of the universities, J. A. Corry, proposed a three-point alternative to the Spinks recommendations which involved:

1. The strengthening of the Committee on University Affairs so that it would be more effective as a co-ordinating agency, including the appointment of a full-time Chairman and secretariat;
2. The establishment of a small secretariat for the Committee of Presidents in order to improve communications and execute decisions [which occurred in December 1966];
3. The commissioning of a full-dress inquiry into post-secondary education in Ontario at all levels and for all types of institutions [eventually established in 1969 as the Commission on Post-Secondary Education in Ontario, chaired by Dr. Douglas T. Wright].²⁶⁵

Although Corry was the Commission's most severe critic, he publicly acknowledged that it had served to confirm Ontario's need for a rationale and plan before further expansion of graduate study and research occurred. The government's rejection of the recommendations of the Spinks report placed the challenge of planning the graduate enterprise firmly in the lap of the universities. Steps were initiated to achieve system-wide co-operation and coordinated graduate program planning. However, the undergraduate enterprise remained relatively unplanned beyond the realm of individual institutional decision-making.²⁶⁶ Chapter 5 provides a detailed study of the impact of the Spinks Commission on program coordination and planning efforts that ensued after 1966.

If the parameters of legitimacy for government intervention had not been clearly defined prior to the Spinks report, they became quite clear after it. The lesson it provided was

265. "Ontario University a Good Diagnosis but not the Cure", *The Hamilton Spectator*, January 7, 1967.

266. The rationale for the government's unregulated approach to undergraduate program development is suggested in the 1971-72 *Biennial Report of the Committee on University Affairs (Ontario)*, p. 11, where it is asserted that "There have been no serious suggestions to regulate programs at the undergraduate level. Bachelor's programs, surely, must be a reflection of a university's own character and innovativeness."

not lost on the Committee on University Affairs and this was reflected in their 1967 report. The Committee's first annual public report issued in December 1967 carefully set out the role of the Committee *vis-a-vis* the universities and reinforced the institution as the locus of responsibility for effective management:

When resources are limited choice must be made between alternative goals; very often these choices have not been made consciously. There is little appetite for systematic planning; "foot-in-the-door" budgeting is found time and time again. Effective management is required to maximize benefits from limited resources. Such a notion of management is entirely consistent with the ideal of university autonomy. Only within the institutions, in the Senates and Councils, can priorities be ordered and the necessary decisions taken.²⁶⁷

In spelling out its own responsibilities, the Committee cited "the formulation...of policies affecting all universities"²⁶⁸ as its most important function, noting that its other principal task was "the provision of advice on levels of operating support needed, from year to year, and on needs and priorities in capital spending."²⁶⁹ "New legislation, program development, and the establishment of new institutions"²⁷⁰ were cited as matters the Committee was also "concerned with".²⁷¹ Given that the individual universities were adamant about their right to exercise a substantial degree of autonomy, the Committee described the delicate balancing role they faced and signalled to the institutions that greater collective autonomy could facilitate government-university relations:

...the Committee on University Affairs has been well aware of the delicate balance required in providing for the needs of such a rapidly expanding system without extravagance or waste, while at the same time preserving the effective autonomy of individual institutions. In its efforts to develop general policies

267. Committee on University Affairs, *Report of the Committee on University Affairs 1967*, December 31, 1967, p. 7.

268. *Ibid.*

269. *Ibid.*

270. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

271. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

the Committee on University Affairs has been most concerned with finding effective bases for development and total fiscal control related to overall function, as opposed to any movement towards overt control of detail. ... Because some questions transcend the individual university it may become necessary to think in terms of a "collective autonomy" ... to provide diversity with interdependence and to present a common front on matters of vital importance.²⁷²

In this climate of fiercely defended autonomy and rejection of centralized planning, a formula-financing scheme was introduced to create a neutral conduit by which state support (on which the universities had quickly come to depend), could be allocated while avoiding line-by-line scrutiny of institutional budgets that could threaten to transform Ontario's universities (on whose expertise the state had come to depend), into state agencies. The formula system of university finance, introduced for the 1967-68 year, reinforced the link between university entitlements and the government's policy objective of accessibility. Further, it served to reinforce the universities' position that planning and management of university affairs was properly undertaken at the institutional level.

Also in 1967, in response to a recommendation made by the universities, the Minister of Education announced that a Commission on Post-Secondary Education would be established to create the plan for university development which Spinks had noted was so sadly lacking during the period of rapid expansion of the university sector underwritten by public funds. This commission, however, would not commence its work until 1969, well after the period of expansion had concluded and after the new allocative mechanism for the distribution of operating grants on a formulaic basis had been in place for two years.

272. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

Following the enormous expansion of the publicly assisted university sector in the sixties, and the *de novo* establishment of a system of provincial colleges of applied arts and technology in 1965 which were intended to round out the postsecondary opportunities for Ontario's secondary school graduates seeking advanced, but applied "job ready," training prior to entering the workforce, doubts were arising about the sagacity of, and need for, such wholesale expansion of postsecondary education. In the next section, we turn to an examination of the context in which provincial consideration of structures and policies related to university system development occurred as well as the national and provincial reports which contributed to the context and substance of such considerations in the 1970s.

3.4 Developments in the 1970s: The Decade After

Post-war university expansion had been driven by the significant demographic changes that occurred between 1945 and 1965 (the "baby boom" cohort); the competitive drive for scientific and technological leadership - a competition inflamed by the United States during the Cold War as it aspired to international technological supremacy following the 1957 Soviet launching of the Sputnik space satellite; and by the transformation of public perceptions about universities - from the traditional view of universities as a privilege of the elite, to institutions that would prepare a substantial number of the nation's youth for well-paying jobs that would translate into prosperity for all. A post-war economic boom bank-rolled a decade of dramatic university expansion.

By the late 1960s the public had begun to question the sagacity of the large and increasing public investment in education. These concerns were buttressed by observations of worsening employment prospects for university graduates leading to underemployment and

unemployment, student radicalism which had overflowed from the American collegiate reaction to civil rights issues and the Vietnam war,²⁷³ and increasing scepticism with respect to the personal and social rates of return on the rapidly escalating public investment in higher education.²⁷⁴

Governments, for their part, had no hard data for monitoring the patterns or direction of change, and were bereft of mechanisms for reorienting their expansionary public policy framework within the context of the non-interventionist stances they had taken *vis-à-vis* the university sector. They turned to external advisors for advice. During the 1970s a series of commissions was asked to reevaluate the patterns of postsecondary expansion and expenditure, develop new directions for the development of public institutions and recommend new structures with which to facilitate university-government relations.

At the turn of the decade, however, the first detailed analysis of the nature of university-government relations was undertaken from a national perspective which anticipated, informed, and preempted²⁷⁵ much of the debate that would ensue around the issue in Ontario in subsequent years.

273. Edward B. Harvey, "Canadian Higher Education and the Seventies", *Interchange*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 1974, p. 42.

274. In 1971, the Economic Council of Canada reported that between 1960 and 1967, the proportion of total expenditures devoted to education by all levels of government in Canada rose from nearly 15% to 20% and could be expected to continue to increase.

275. In introducing the notion of the universities being preemptive, I have noted what appears to be a conscious strategy on the part of the university community, nationally and provincially, to operationalize the observation that "the best defence (of university autonomy in the face of potential government intervention) is a good offence".

**3.4.1 Commission on the Relations between Universities and Governments, 1970
(Hurtubise, Rowat Commission)**

In 1968, the national Commission on the Relations between Universities and Governments, with Commissioners René Hurtubise, Professor of Law, Université de Montréal, and Donald Rowat, Professor of Political Science, Carleton University, considered how and under what terms and conditions public support should be provided to universities.²⁷⁶ The mandate of Commissioners Hurtubise and Rowat was broadly conceived. It included consideration of the distinctive role of universities at the community, provincial, regional, national and international levels; a determination of the need, nature and extent of university autonomy, and government and public control of universities; and the recommendation of appropriate instruments by which relations between universities and governments could be established that did justice to their responsibilities.²⁷⁷

At the outset of their study, the Commissioners asserted that "...substantial institutional autonomy is needed as an instrument for the preservation of academic freedom,"²⁷⁸ but were quick to point out that "[t]his acceptance of the need for autonomy does not invalidate the interests of the state."²⁷⁹ For Hurtubise and Rowat, the way in which the interests of the state and the responsibilities of the university were reconciled was complicated by the lack of clear aims for universities - both on the part of governments and within the institutions themselves. Added to this was uncertainty about the purposes public funding for universities should serve.

276. The Commission on the Relations between Universities and Governments was commissioned by the Canadian Association of University Teachers, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, the Canadian Union of Students (CUS), and Union générale des étudiants du Québec (UGEQ). Funding was provided through a grant from the Ford Foundation.

277. René Hurtubise and Donald C. Rowat, *The University, Society and Government: The Report of the Commission on the Relations Between Universities and Governments*. Ottawa: The University of Ottawa Press, 1970, p. viii.

278. *Ibid.*, p. 73.

279. *Ibid.*

They observed that efforts at voluntary co-operation on the part of universities had been unsuccessful. At the same time, they argued that governments had not provided the necessary framework within which meaningful inter-university co-operation could take place and governmental responsibilities could be borne.

Hurtubise and Rowat concluded that voluntary co-operation among universities had failed because "...a collection of institutions cannot adequately express or safeguard the interests of the state in the sphere of higher education."²⁸⁰ It was the view of the Commissioners that:

...the voluntary co-operation of universities has seldom been "voluntary" or even "co-operative". As a rule, whatever co-operation there is has been brought about by pressure from government; practically all "voluntary" co-operative arrangements now in existence derive their efficacy from either a direct or indirect threat of governmental sanctions.²⁸¹

Traditions associated with university autonomy were identified as inhibiting anything but superficial inter-institutional co-operation. Co-operation would require individual institutions to give up or at least share some power with others. It was argued that autonomy had made it difficult for institutions to delegate this power, and there was no way to ensure that common decisions would be enforced. Furthermore, the Commission noted that "...the executive head of each institution was bound both by his responsibilities towards "his" institution and by the natural human tendency in such circumstances to defend its interests."²⁸²

Hurtubise and Rowat concluded that the only motivation for voluntary co-operation was collective institutional opposition to real or anticipated governmental pressure. As

280. *Ibid.*, p. 85.

281. *Ibid.*, p. 85.

282. *Ibid.*, p. 86.

President Dunton, then Chair of the Committee of Presidents of the Provincially-assisted Universities of Ontario (CPPUO), indicated:

The universities are trying to develop a central machinery before the government develops its own. This is going to be the race. We are trying to develop among ourselves the research capacity to know what we are doing, which nobody knows at present.²⁸³

The Commissioners also noted that:

...there has been a tendency on the part of inter-university bodies to protect the *status quo* - to distrust and oppose governments in their efforts to safeguard the public interest and develop new forms of post-secondary education.²⁸⁴

They concluded that:

Universities, like all other human organizations, are selfish, and without sanctions will not co-operate in any but a trivial sense. Since the only agency of society that can supply the necessary sanctions is the government, it must provide the framework within which this co-operation can take place. Nothing will stimulate co-operation so much as a governmental assurance that any desirable co-operative arrangements agreed on will be enforced.²⁸⁵

In view of their findings, the Commissioners recommended for provinces with three or more university campuses the establishment of a coordinating and planning commission with a statutory base, a semi-autonomous status and substantial powers. According to the Commissioners, this approach was arrived at based on their study of the Canadian situation, but also on U.S. practices. At that time, the coordinating board model had been adopted in 21 states and was rapidly gaining ascendancy over all other methods of coordination.²⁸⁶ The Commissioners recommended that existing university advisory committees and grants

283. *Ibid.*, p. 88, citing President Dunton, *Conference on Higher Education in Industrial Societies*, Boston, 1969, p. 56.

284. *Ibid.*, p. 88.

285. *Ibid.*, p. 88.

286. *Ibid.*, p. 111.

commissions be reconstituted. Although their scope would be limited to universities because of their special nature *vis-à-vis* other forms of post-secondary education, the Commissioners argued that they should have greater powers than did existing mechanisms.

The Commissioners argued further that there were two primary reasons bodies responsible for the coordination and planning of higher education ought to be established in law: with advisory and executive functions spelled out by statute, greater certainty and better protection would be provided for the university community and for the commission itself. They concluded: "The university community would thus be assured of the limits of the commission's powers, and the commission, by having statutory independence, would be less liable to charges of 'being in the government's pocket'".²⁸⁷

The Commissioners, however, argued that this concept of a university commission would only work if both universities and governments transferred some parts of their traditional authority to the Commission in order that the Commission could plan, co-ordinate and preview proposed programs. The Commissioners' major emphasis on planning and the elaboration of a master plan for universities was considered essential in view of what they described as "the inherent stubbornness of established institutions." They believed that:

...the inevitable conflicts among the universities themselves and between them and the co-ordinating agency should take place, and be reconciled, at the planning rather than the executive stage. In this later stage, the power of the co-ordinating body should be limited to that of a policeman, a function easily performed if that body controls finances and if the earlier resolution of conflicts has resulted in a consensus among all participants.²⁸⁸

The Commissioners argued that a system blueprint would ensure that "a government will make its decisions within a comprehensive, logical framework rather than on an *ad hoc* basis of

287. *Ibid.*, p. 113

288. *Ibid.*, p. 114.

political expediency in reaction to pressures of the moment.”²⁸⁹ The Commissioners also argued that to avoid preoccupation with individual university budgets and administration, the executive functions of the new university commissions should be limited mainly to those necessary for developing and enforcing an overall plan.

As envisioned, the new commissions would also have had responsibility for allocating the total sum of public subvention for universities. It was recommended that a major portion, in the range of 75% of the total allocation, be distributed on the basis of a general formula with the remainder granted at the discretion of the commission in order to take special circumstances into account and to promote desirable new developments.²⁹⁰ Because the executive powers of the proposed coordinating body would be narrow, advisory powers were conceived to be broad, and the favoured approach included a provision obliging the Minister of Education to seek the advice of the commission on university matters.

Finally, the Hurtubise and Rowat Commission advocated that the commissions have maximum memberships of 15 persons, drawn in equal proportions from government, society and the academic community, retain their own expert staffs, and have full-time chairs. Consultation with all universities, faculty and staff representatives on proposals that would affect the system would be a matter of course, all commissions' recommendations and studies would become public, and government would respond publicly to them. In order to preserve the independence, credibility, and role of each commission as an intermediary between the universities and the government, it was seen as crucial that universities and university

289. *Ibid.*, p. 118.

290. *Ibid.*, p. 116

organizations not bypass the commission by going directly to the government.²⁹¹

The Board of Directors of the Association of Universities and Colleges Canada, one of the sponsors of the report, issued a statement in September, 1970, roundly condemning the report of the Commission on the Relations between Universities and Governments²⁹² stating that:

This board is particularly disturbed by the philosophy which seems to underlie the document. The report leaves the impression that universities and educational institutions are instruments of the state (the state being synonymous in Canada with the provinces).²⁹³

It was also immediately disowned by its other sponsors, the Canadian Association of University Teachers, the Canadian Union of Students and l'Union général des étudiants du Québec.²⁹⁴ These groups rejected the Commissioners' underlying assumption that if the political climate and the socio-political structures within which the university finds itself "are conducive to the promotion of academic freedom, then there may not be any real need for the university to have any substantial autonomy..."²⁹⁵

Pursuant to the Hurtubise Rowat report, and in a continuation of its exploration of issues pertaining to university coordination and future development, AUCC sponsored a second national study, this time focusing on university research policy.

291. *Ibid.*, p. 125.

292. Cameron, *More Than an Academic Question...*, *op. cit.* citing AUCC, *University Affairs*, Vol. xi, No. 9 (November 1970), p. 15.

293. Al Fiorino, "An Analysis of the Salient Features of René Hurtubise's Conception of the University," *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, VI-2, 1976, p. 26, quoting from the AUCC reaction in *University Affairs*, Vol. xi, No. 9 (November 1970), p. 15.

294. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

295. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

3.4.2 The Commission to Study the Rationalization of University Research, 1972 (Bonneau-Corry Report)

In 1972, the Commission to Study the Rationalization of University Research, undertaken by Louis-Phillipe Bonneau and J.A. Corry,²⁹⁶ and sponsored by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, issued a two-volume report entitled *Quest for the Optimum: Research Policy in the Universities of Canada*. The Commission's terms of reference stated that is was expected:

To study, report and make recommendations on the mechanisms, structures and processes required to ensure that research undertakings in the universities of Canada can be planned to serve, without undue duplication, both the advancement of knowledge, and provincial, regional and national development.²⁹⁷

The report addressed issues of unplanned growth of graduate studies and research and institutional capacity to support or manage such activities adequately; and rationalization of research within institutions, between several institutions and at the national level. The Commission observed:

The university instinct, legitimate in itself, to allow each researcher to choose his research interests freely clashes with the governmental duty to account for expenditures of public money in something like specific terms. Some compromise between these two legitimate and competing interests must be found.²⁹⁸

The Commission argued that the absence of an institutionally planned approach to graduate studies and research had contributed to the neglect of undergraduate teaching and uncoordinated, low-quality research. They concluded:

296. Louis-Phillipe Bonneau was associated with Laval University and the National Research Council. J.A. Corry was associated with Queen's University and the Canada Council.

297. Louis-Philippe Bonneau and J.A. Corry, *Quest for the Optimum: Research Policy in the Universities of Canada*, Ottawa: AUCC, 1972, vol. 1, Appendix A, "Terms of Reference of the Commission to Study the Rationalisation of University Research in Canada", p. 207.

298. *Ibid.*, p. 205.

It has come to be generally recognised that, in the last ten years, many of the newer universities, as well as some of the older smaller ones, were too hasty and too determined in trying to build up a substantial research component and in pushing into graduate work at the PhD level. In the result, a number of them over-extended themselves and have come into serious difficulties. Too many departments in too many universities are offering PhD programs they are not equipped to mount, to the detriment of graduate work in the country as a whole.²⁹⁹

The Commission pointed to the dilemma facing smaller institutions. By virtue of the premium that university culture places on “frontier research” (research with a largely empirical basis as differentiated from “reflective inquiry” which emphasized intellectual synthesis), the Commission recognized that smaller institutions that declared themselves as primarily undergraduate teaching institutions would

have been regarded in many quarters as having chosen to be second rate. They would not have been able to recruit promising staff members because such persons were being driven to think it important to maintain mobility through frontier research and supervision of graduate students.³⁰⁰

The Commission argued for universities to accept differentiation by function - that not all institutions need be engaged in frontier or basic research. While the commission advocated the concentration of research effort in a few universities, it acknowledged the political unpalatability of such a view to the newer universities:

If the smaller and medium-sized universities scattered across the country continue to think (mistakenly, of course) that their quality depends on hanging on to, and enlarging, their research funds for frontier research, they can rouse enough political opposition to concentration in a few centres of excellence to prevent it taking place.³⁰¹

The Commission went on to advocate that the universities self-impose measures to prevent and eliminate proliferation of PhD programs. One of their foremost suggestions in this

299. *Ibid.*, p. 54.

300. *Ibid.*

301. *Ibid.*, p. 55.

regard called on universities to abolish “the premium given to frontier research in the policies of the universities on promotions and salary increases”.³⁰² It advocated the establishment of institutional research objectives everywhere, restrictions on research funds which would force institutions to consciously plan for their optimal allocation, and enunciation of federal and provincial objectives and priorities for research. It further recommended the establishment of a national, provincial and local strategy for the rationalization of research. By managing the research function within the context of institutional priorities and by distinguishing between two kinds of research defined as “reflective inquiry” and “frontier research”, institutional, provincial and national research priorities could be more readily identified and coordinated in concert with government objectives, and centres of specialization could be more frequently developed to foster research excellence.³⁰³

The recommendations of the Bonneau-Corry report were viewed by the universities as flowing from “a good analysis.”³⁰⁴ However, the recommendations, which implied that in future some universities, particularly the smaller institutions, should exercise self-denial in terms of the research function while the more established universities enjoyed less competition for limited research resources was politically unacceptable. Edward Monahan explains:

...the distinction that the report drew between research and scholarship was not a distinction that made much sense to many university politicians because most university politicians were interested in maximizing research income and most faculty members were interested in getting research grants, particularly in the life and physical sciences. That was ... an important distinction, [but] it still has a pretty rough ride in terms of getting acceptance in the university community.³⁰⁵

302. *Ibid.*, p. 62.

303. For the details of these recommendations, see L.P. Bonneau et al., *op. cit.*, Chapter 10: “Rationalisation Within One University”; Chapter 11: “Rationalisation Between Several Universities”; and Chapter 12: “Rationalisation at the National Level.”

304. Interview with Edward Monahan, April 10, 1997.

305. *Ibid.*

There is no evidence that this report had much impact on the behaviour of governments or the institutions. In retrospect, few AUCC reports did, in large part because university policy was a provincial matter and the impact of the recommendations from province to province was so different and hard to measure. The Ontario government had no formal research policies and continued to deal with the underlying conflict among the institutions about “who does what” in the graduate and research areas indirectly in the context of graduate program development and funding policy. While some argued that the universities should “proceed with caution in giving over to governments decisions about what kinds of university research...will be productive,”³⁰⁶ the study did serve to raise the profile of research in relation to institutional finances and administration and in relation to institutional and system planning. This latter influence would be manifest in the treatment of research in a subsequent AUCC report of 1974 entitled *Planning for Planning*.

3.5 The Search Begins for A Master Plan for Ontario

By the early 1970s, it was clear that the policies and actions of the 1960s had not only placed postsecondary education in Ontario on a trajectory of enormous increase in student enrolments, it had signalled a turning point in public expectations. Attitudes toward higher education had undergone a transformation with respect to the role of universities and an ever greater percentage of secondary school graduates aspired to university attendance. However, government was beginning to show concern that there might be limitations to the public return on its investment in higher education and questioned its ability to support an ever-greater

306. Bertrand L. Hansen, “University Research Policy - Structure or Results?,” *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. III -1, 1973, p. 83.

proportion of public dollars going to postsecondary education in the face of competing public demands in other sectors such as health care and social services. This occurred in spite of the government's recognition that postsecondary education was a potential engine for economic growth and international competitiveness, as well as a boon to social and cultural policy objectives. Government began to recoil from an open-ended commitment to financing growth in the postsecondary sphere in the early 1970s, while at the same time, individuals were becoming more aware of the personal and economic benefits associated with a postsecondary education in an increasingly competitive and global economy. Along with universities, Ontario's colleges of applied arts and technology, established in 1965-66, expanded despite a stable or declining level of annual increases in provincial grants.³⁰⁷

The central observation of the Spinks Commission that the "most striking characteristic of higher ... education in Ontario is the complete absence of a master plan, of an educational policy, and of a co-ordinating authority for the provincially-supported institutions..." had provided the catalyst for a controversial provincial initiative to recast university-government relations. The provincial challenge was to reconcile the growing disparity between the changing fiscal priorities caused by budgetary constraint, and the activities and financial expectations of the institutions in an environment where increases in student demand were anticipated in the short-term followed by anticipated enrolment decline over the longer-term.

307. In constant dollars, in 1975-76, the Ontario government provided the universities with 83% of the operating income per student (provincial grants and fees) that they received in 1970-71. By 1979, university operating income in constant dollars had recovered somewhat, to a level of 87% of 1970-71 levels. See Ontario Council on University Affairs, "Introduction", *Fourth Annual Report 1977-78*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, March 1978, p. 9, Table 1.

3.5.1 The Commission on Post-Secondary Education in Ontario, 1972 (Wright Commission)

In 1969, a comprehensive study of post-secondary education was initiated by the Ontario government. Between April 1969 and 1972, the Commission on Post-Secondary Education in Ontario (COPSEO), chaired by Douglas T. Wright, then also Chairman of the Committee on University Affairs, undertook "to consider, in the light of present provisions for university and other post-secondary education in Ontario, the pattern necessary to ensure the further effective development of post-secondary education in the province during the period to 1980, and in general terms to 1990, and make recommendations thereon."³⁰⁸ The scope of this mandate included universities, Ontario's system of colleges of applied arts and technology (established in 1965, but operational for just two years, since 1967), and adult and continuing education.

The province's discretionary approach to allocating provincial operating grants to universities had been abandoned just two years previous, and had been replaced by a provincial operating grants formula.³⁰⁹ The period 1967-68 to 1972-73 has been characterized as an implementation period where minor refinements were introduced to work out details and contingencies not addressed when the operating grants formula was originally designed. It also

308. The Commissioners numbered 14 persons drawn from universities, colleges, labour, government and the broader public. Members included: Douglas T. Wright, (Chair to Feb. 1972), Deputy Provincial Secretary for Social Development, former Dean of Engineering, University of Waterloo, past Chair of Ontario Committee on University Affairs; D.O. Davis, (Chair from Feb 22, 1972), Vice-Chair, Council of Regents of CAATs; David Black, Director, Institute for Research on Public Policy and former member of Canadian Union of Students; J.M.S. Careless, Professor of History, U of T; William Cherry, Ontario Housing Corp., former Ex.Secretary to CAAT Students' Association of Ontario; John J. Deutsch, Principal, Queen's University, former Chair, Economic Council of Canada; Reva Gerstein, Professor, York University, member of CUA; Laurent Isabelle, Professor University of Ottawa; Vincent Kelly, Toronto lawyer; John S. Kirkaldy, Professor, McMaster University, past Chair Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations; William Ladyman, International Vice-President, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; Hugh L. Macaulay, former chair, Board of Governors, Ryerson Polytechnic Institute (resigned Feb. 1971); William T. Newnham, President, Seneca College; Edna E. Tietze, Master of English Literature, Conestoga College.

309. Details of the shortcomings of the discretionary approach to the university operating grants allocation process are provided in Stenton, *op cit.*, pp. 109-110.

involved numerous attempts to initiate major formula funding revisions, particularly with respect to program weights. Participation rates, which had increased rapidly in the late 1960s, levelled-off by the end of this period. Rapid enrolment growth, averaging 14.1% annually, suddenly plummeted to 0.6% in 1972-73. Also at the end of this period, growth in funding per Basic Income Unit (BIU), which had initially been higher than the rate of inflation, fell below the rate of inflation.³¹⁰

Following on the heels of an initial, interim, report, *A Statement of Issues*, in November 1970, the Commission on Post-Secondary Education in Ontario circulated a second "draft report" for discussion in January 1972. This document proposed to turn university-government relations in Ontario on its head and the Council of Ontario Universities considered the sum of the proposals emanating from the draft report to be unacceptable. The Commission had recommended a completely new approach to allocating public support to post-secondary education based on separating "at source but not at the institutional level, instructional costs and other costs including research..."³¹¹ This proposal and its recommendations on the structure of government-university relations raised considerable concern in the farthest reaches of the university community. The Commission asserted that: "The time has come for clear definition of the jurisdiction and responsibilities of the various component elements of post-secondary education and their incorporation in appropriate legislation."³¹² It proposed that all provincial responsibilities for post-secondary education, including funding, be consolidated in a single department and that a "Senior Advisory Committee" be created to assist the new Minister. This

310. J. Paul Stenton, *op cit.*, p. 190.

311. Commission on Post-Secondary Education in Ontario, *Draft Report*, Toronto: Queen's Printer, January 1972, p. 42.

312. *Ibid.*, p. 33

body would “provide a continuous overview of postsecondary education in Ontario and... provide the Minister with advice on the allocation of funds between the three main sectors within his jurisdiction.”³¹³

COPSEO’s proposals were highly specific. Post-secondary institutions would be classified into three categories - universities, colleges and an open educational sector comprising museums, art galleries and the creative and performing arts. Each would have a separate government-appointed coordinating board with extensive powers. The Commission observed:

The noteworthy departure of these recommendations is, of course, the delegation of executive power to a province-wide body. It would be the first time in Ontario that the interest of the public would be represented in university affairs on such a broad basis. In essence, this set of recommendations asserts that it is in the public interest to co-ordinate and plan university education on a province-wide basis; that it is, more specifically, the right of a province-wide body to decide where and when new programs (graduate as well as undergraduate) should be established and/or abolished, and what kind of admission standards should prevail in the province; and that these decisions are best made by a body that is not an integral part of a government department.³¹⁴

Universities perceived this recommendation as a direct attack on academic freedom:

When we have a government-appointed central body empowered to abolish courses - to say what may or may not be taught - the essential freedom of the university will have been lost. ...The Commission invokes a principle with which we have no quarrel: Massive support from the public treasury requires strict public accountability. But the Commission does not demonstrate that this principle requires the use of the machinery recommended.³¹⁵

But what alternative machinery was there? COPSEO Chair, D.T. Wright had expressed his concerns in respect to COU’s authority at a system level:

313. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

314. *Ibid.*, p. 35.

315. Council of Ontario Universities, *Responses to the Draft Report of the Commission on Post-Secondary Education in Ontario*, Toronto: Council of Ontario Universities, 1972, p. 13.

multilateral decision-making does not reveal...attractive results *except* under duress. Alex Corry convened all the university department heads to make the case for voluntary coordination years ago. Nothing much happened until the University Affairs Committee dropped the [funding] embargo. I can only conclude that some external influence is required for excellence.³¹⁶

COU went on to acknowledge that “At the moment this power [to implement binding group decisions] does not exist because COU is a purely voluntary organization.”

Edward Monahan recalls the university sector’s reaction to the proposal buffer body:

When the Wright interim report came out with the recommendations for a buffer body with executive authority established in legislation, the universities were apoplectic. They were flabbergasted. And they were wildly opposed.³¹⁷

To mitigate the proposed buffer’s potential authority over the universities, COU suggested that if the COPSEO would consider a less interventionist approach to system planning and coordination, COU would commit to “seek support from the Senates and boards of the fourteen universities for a set of proposals involving delegation to COU of the specific essential powers necessary for rational and coordinated operation of the system”³¹⁸

In effect, as a modification to COPSEO’s recommendation that there be a buffer body with executive authority, the universities proposed what was essentially a “double buffer”³¹⁹ system, that envisioned government devolving authority to its own buffer body and, on matters of system planning, to COU’s buffer.³²⁰ In this way, COU felt it could provide a balance of power against the authority of the government’s proposed buffer.³²¹

316. *Ibid.*, citing a letter from D.T. Wright, March 10, 1972.

317. Interview with Edward Monahan, April 10, 1997.

318. Council of Ontario Universities, *Responses to the Draft Report ...*, *op cit.*, p. 16.

319. Interview with Edward Monahan, April 10, 1997.

320. Council of Ontario Universities, *New Structure, New Environment: Review 1972-73 to 1974-75*, Toronto: The Council, 1976, p. 2.

321. Interview with Edward Monahan, April 10, 1997.

COPSEO rejected COU's "double buffer" scheme. In its final report, *The Learning Society*, released early in 1973, the Commission detailed the shortcomings of the COU proposal:

The COU proposes a complex system of authority and responsibility consisting of three levels: institutions, government and between them an intermediary consisting of a reconstituted advisory Committee on University Affairs (CUA) and a buttressed Council of Ontario Universities with delegated government powers. This may be called the "double-intermediary" or "double-buffer" system. ...Essentially, the system would invest a voluntary interest-group organization, the COU, with delegated governmental executive powers. In terms of public policy, it would be a step backwards from the present trend in Ontario to curb the extensive delegated powers of existing interest groups...and to appoint lay members to their governing bodies.³²²

For good measure, COPSEO also cited York University's negative assessment of the proposal, subtly underlining the inherent divisiveness within COU, another reason the "double buffer" proposal was untenable.³²³

The proposed university body, the "Council on University Affairs", was envisioned with executive and advisory powers, and responsibilities to:

- a) plan and coordinate, in consultation with universities and related voluntary associations, the university sector of post-secondary education in the province;
- b) advise the Minister of Post-Secondary Education on the global sums needed for the support of institutions and activities within its jurisdiction;
- c) allocate and distribute operating and capital funds among the institutions;
- d) publish annual reports, to be tabled in the Legislature, describing the activities of the Ontario Council for University Affairs; and
- e) hold public hearings, from time to time, at the institutions under its jurisdiction.³²⁴

322. Commission on Post-Secondary Education in Ontario, *The Learning Society: Report of the Commission on Post-Secondary Education in Ontario*, Toronto: Queen's Printer, 1972, p. 109.

323. *Ibid.*

324. *Ibid.*, p. 191.

It would serve as a "buffer" between the government and universities:

Government and institutions would have to delegate part of their jurisdiction to a third body - the buffer - to be used in accomplishing those tasks that no government body, university, or college can perform, alone or in concert and that would satisfy public authority that system-wide planning and coordination were orderly and effective.³²⁵

COPSEO argued that it was essential for the proposed buffer to have executive authority or, in the long term, it would run the risk of being a hostage to fortune. COPSEO pointed out that:

...a purely advisory body to government cannot function as a satisfactory buffer...If a body is to initiate as well as mediate, insulate, and protect, it must by definition be able to exercise authority freely within its area of jurisdiction...³²⁶

Further, COPSEO argued that the buffer required executive authority to protect properly the public interest:

...in a field such as post-secondary education, which is infinitely more sensitive [than areas such as health, finance, and welfare] to political pressures and bureaucratic controls, other devices are needed to protect the public interest under defined powers of legislation.³²⁷

In addition, overall coordination and planning of postsecondary education was to be undertaken by "a permanent Ontario Committee on Post-Secondary Education". The Commission advocated that:

This important body should have no executive or administrative responsibilities, and should not be part of any other body involved in post-secondary education in Ontario. What the Economic Council of Canada is to economic policy-making nationally, the committee should be to planning on all aspects of post-secondary education provincially. Hence it should be responsible for the uninterrupted scanning and monitoring of educational needs

325. *Ibid.*, p. 111.

326. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

327. *Ibid.*

and resources in the province. Through studies, hearings, and publications, it should generate a steady flow of reliable information; it should isolate problems, suggest criteria for their solution, forecast trends, and identify new challenges. Above all, it should provide a valuable forum for participants in all areas of post-secondary education. Its membership should be small and drawn from government, various lay groups, and institutions.³²⁸

Notwithstanding the additional structures to facilitate system coordination and planning, the Commission envisioned the continuation of a shared role for the universities in this regard. The Commission qualified the government's anticipated intervention in this way:

In advocating the adoption of the buffer model, we recognize a continuing vital role for institutions and their organizations in system-wide planning and coordination. Our educational goals, the interests of good management, and the commanding role of post-secondary education in society suggest the need for its representatives to be centrally involved through a regular consultative process in the making of policies which affect them and in the selection of appointees for the proposed provincial bodies.³²⁹

In retrospect, *The Learning Society*, was to be the only comprehensive review of the postsecondary policy framework to include both college and university-level institutions undertaken for close to thirty years.³³⁰

The Commission's recommendations posed major challenges to university autonomy. The report was generally viewed by the universities as too radical. Government accepted few of the recommendations, in part because of the potential for increased costs, as well as due to the lack of support expressed by the sector during the government's subsequent consultation process, which was extensive.³³¹

With respect to COPSEO's recommendation for the establishment of a buffer, COU

328. *Ibid.*, p. 115.

329. *Ibid.*, p. 117

330. The only other such commission being the Advisory Panel on Postsecondary Education, 1996.

331. Patrick Beard, *The Ontario Council on University Affairs: What, Why and How*, unpublished paper, April 1983, p. 37.

indicated that it

strongly supported the terms of reference for the Ontario Council on University Affairs as proposed by the Commission on Post-Secondary Education, on the understanding that the Council would seek systematic planning advice from COU and would work closely with COU in the implementation of plans.³³²

COU made this position known to the Minister in spring 1973, a time when the Minister was also grappling with the Ministry's view that there were some inconsistencies between the recent recommendations of the Committee on Government Productivity and the proposal for an Ontario Council on University Affairs with some executive powers. The 1971 reports of the Committee on Government Productivity stressed that the role of government was to set general policy and the definition of what general policy was *vis-à-vis* universities sparked a debate among the university community and between universities and the Minister. The council proposed by the Wright Commission provided an example of what the Report on Government Productivity considered "a position of independence in relation to partisan politics which is essential for the performance of certain functions of a judicial or quasi-judicial nature."³³³ For their part, the universities were prepared to accept more explicit terms of reference for the new Council which stipulated that it should advise the Minister on matters of general policy concerning universities. The broader university community appeared to be in agreement around the issue of a Council with some executive authority and this was reflected in a public statement in early 1974 resulting from representatives of the university community participating in a seminar on *Ontario and its Universities* to the effect that:

We believe that the universities and government should be connected by a highly competent body which can provide advice to government on the

332. Council of Ontario Universities, *Review 1972-73 to 1974-75: New Structure New Environment*, Toronto: The Council, 1976, p. 3.

333. *Committee on Government Productivity: Interim Report No. 9*, Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario, 1971, p. 37.

development and functioning of the university system and guidelines to the university community as a whole. Such a body should no more be allowed to usurp the government's responsibility for total resource allocation to the universities than it should be permitted to stifle university initiatives in meeting demonstrated needs. But it should be the respected source of advice on such matters as the needs of the universities, the formulae for the allocation of funds, and the establishment of new programmes and new institutions. In its relationship with the universities, this body should facilitate and encourage cooperation and planning by the Council of Ontario Universities and the Ministry. It should be empowered to require that policies for the system are respected and implemented by the universities. This power could best be exercised if the proposed commission had the authority to allocate funds among the universities. For the most part, such allocations should be on the basis of some objective formula acceptable to government and the universities, but the commission would need limited discretionary power to make modest changes in the application of the formula.³³⁴

The government rejected the notion of a body with executive authority. William G.

Davis, then Minister of Colleges and Universities, explained why:

...there was a recognition that we were really developing a system that would become somewhat centralized, and there, the committee, if it had executive powers, would...run into the possibility of encroaching on institutional and academic freedom. I think there was sufficient understanding on the part of universities, that without doing this bit of [the] legislation, we could build greater discipline in by paying more attention to the advice of the committee. ...I think...that, in many respects, happened. ...the decision was made very simply in a recognition that once you went down the path of giving executive responsibility, ...knowing how these creatures take on a life of their own, that that would have become a very dominant institution, and I think, might have impacted in a negative sense, not economically, but in terms of the functioning of the institutions, ...I look back and I don't second guess that decision.³³⁵

So, in May 1974, the government introduced Bill 68, to provide for the establishment of a 12-member Ontario Council on University Affairs. The Council was to be "an advisory body" to the Minister and to the Lieutenant Governor in Council that would make recommendations to

334. Council of Ontario Universities, *Review 1972-73 to 1974-75: New Structure New Environment*, Toronto: The Council, 1976, pp. 5-6.

335. Interview with William G. Davis, April 16, 1997.

the Minister "on any matter that, in the opinion of Council,"³³⁶ concerned one or more of the Ontario universities. In most respects it was almost indistinguishable from the Committee on University Affairs. However, there was also provision for the Minister or Council to "collect" and "publish" any "such information and statistics as considered necessary or advisable."³³⁷ This provision caused considerable concern in the university community.³³⁸

The Assistant Deputy Minister of the University Affairs Division of the Ministry of Colleges and Universities at the time described the effect of the introduction of legislation compelling the universities to provide certain statistical information to the Ministry:

...there had been a number of discussions and meetings about the information needs of the Ministry in order for it to fulfill its accountability to the House and the public at large. The universities felt quite strongly that the government had no business prescribing information to be provided to it. Such a requirement would be an intrusion on academic freedom and autonomy, the discussions broke down. When the legislation authorizing the establishment of the Ontario Council on University Affairs was introduced, it contained a clause requiring the universities to provide certain statistical information upon request of the government: This power actually existed under the Statistics Act, but its inclusion in the OCUA legislation seemed to confirm the further intrusion of the government in university autonomy and triggered university-induced opposition to this clause in the House.³³⁹

In view of the controversy surrounding the Bill, "the Government simply went ahead and created OCUA by Order-in-Council in September."³⁴⁰ The government quietly abandoned Bill

336. Ontario, *An Act to Amend The Ministry of Colleges and Universities Act, 1971, Bill 68*, Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario, 1974, p. 2.

337. *Ibid.*

338. *Ibid.* The offending section 4b read as follows:

"The Minister, in carrying out his duties and functions under this Act and such other Acts as are assigned to him, may collect such information and statistics as he considers necessary or advisable for this purpose, including the purposes of any advisory body to the Minister, and may publish any information and statistics so collected."

339. Benson A. Wilson. *UAD and URB: An idiosyncratic set of recollections and observations about the activities of the University Affairs Division and the University Relations Branch 1974-84*. Mimeograph, undated, pp. 5-6.

340. John Stubbs, *The Report of the External Advisor to the Minister of Colleges and Universities on the Future Role and Function of the Ontario Council on University Affairs and Its Academic Advisory Committee*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, July, 1988, p. 2.

68 two months later during second reading, following opposition attacks on the government's decision to drop the clause providing for information collection and publication.³⁴¹

As established, OCUA lacked formal terms of reference. However, its first Chair, Stefan Dupré, proceeded to lead the Council as if Bill 68 had passed.³⁴² In the end, the role of OCUA largely mirrored the formal mandate COPSEO had envisioned for it, but in an advisory rather than executive context.

3.5.2 *Planning for Planning, 1974* (Trotter Report)

Just one month after the establishment of the Ontario Council on University Affairs, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada released a report undertaken on its behalf by its Advisory Committee on University Planning entitled *Planning for Planning, Relationships between universities and governments: guidelines to process*. Queen's University Head of Academic Planning, Bernard Trotter, was appointed Director of Research.³⁴³

The intention of the study was to develop practical guidelines for the effective long term planning of Canadian universities. The Committee's terms of reference directed it: "to assess the processes of planning long term development of universities in Canada with special attention to the interaction of institutional, provincial, regional and national authorities."³⁴⁴

341. *Ibid.*

342. *Ibid.*

343. In addition, A.W.R. Carrothers, President of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada and President of the University of Calgary, functioned as the Chair of the AUCC Advisory Committee on Academic Planning for the duration of the study and J. Stefan Dupré, then Chair of the Department of Political Economy at the University of Toronto, was retained as an academic consultant to the Committee until his appointment in June, 1974, as Chairman-designate of the Ontario Council on University Affairs.

344. Bernard Trotter and A.W.R. Carrothers, *Planning for Planning - Relationships between universities and governments: guidelines to process*, Ottawa: AUCC, 1974, p. 3.

Underlying the force of the Committee's recommendations for more sophisticated institutional planning and an advisory and synthesizing role for the university collectivity in the development of system-wide long term planning documents was the recognition of a lack of criteria by which governments hold universities accountable. This, it was argued, required greater emphasis, not on structures for planning and coordination, but "on *process* as a prior condition to planning which leads to effective and efficient action."³⁴⁵ As the Committee noted:

Changes in structure alone cannot be expected to resolve these uncertainties about goals unless there is a new emphasis on continuing processes for long term planning. Universities cannot be effective or accountable unless their goals and objectives are understood by themselves and by the public which supports them through government grants. Neither universities nor governments can by themselves satisfactorily resolve the fundamental problem of goals. The search for such a resolution must be the first item on the planning agenda for both universities and governments.

What was required, the Committee concluded, was a well-defined and systematic process for exchanging information and examining basic assumptions with government. The lack of mutually agreed upon goals and purposes to date had, in the Committee's view, resulted from a lack of communication and information, a lack of trust and confidence among those in universities and in governments, and a lack of agreement about the different planning responsibilities of universities and governments and "how these should be made to mesh."

The Committee defined long term planning as "being concerned with basic matters of policy - what to do - rather than the detail of implementation - how to do it". It emphasized the consultative, iterative process that attends to long term planning which requires regular reevaluation and readjustment. Enrolment projections, institutional role differentiation,

345. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

program diversity, a more narrowly prescribed research emphasis and a defined mandate for community service were outcomes anticipated by the authors of the report.³⁴⁶

The report's emphasis on consultative planning was rooted in the observation that *ad hoc* solutions to problems were unsatisfactory on a number of counts:

...*ad hocery* far from solving problems creates uncertainties about process which in turn breeds distrust, suspicion of motives, and makes planning a closed rather than open process. *Ad hocery* which is by definition the kind of planning which goes on when there are not systematic and agreed procedures, normally concerns itself with problems which have already appeared and presented themselves as urgent matters. *Ad hoc* solutions to this kind of problem usually lack follow through. Agreed ways of proceeding prevent the bitterness which results from arbitrary action based on *ad hoc* changes in rules. Agreed processes for consultative planning are prerequisite to planning outcomes which will be satisfactory because they will be acknowledged as legitimate and not arbitrary.³⁴⁷

The report concluded with the observation that the value of planning lies in stable, less wasteful development of universities, and while the Committee was

inclined to think that a properly constituted intermediary body is more likely to ensure effective planning relationships with universities, ...consultative planning can proceed within any structure if all of the parties concerned think it important enough to make it work.³⁴⁸

In Ontario, J. Stefan Dupré, the Committee's academic consultant, was about to have an opportunity to put the planning recommendations and conclusions of the Committee into practice.

346. *Ibid.*, Chapter V: "Outcomes of Planning: Each University's Role Defined", pp. 62-71.

347. *Ibid.*, p. 74.

348. *Ibid.*, p. 77.

3.6 The Ontario Council on University Affairs, 1974

The Ontario Council on University Affairs was established in September 1974 with 20 government-appointed members. It was “to act as a strengthened buffer between the government and the university system...”³⁴⁹ OCUA had neither a statutory base nor executive authority. Its role was a purely advisory one. It could not undertake system coordination and planning, except on terms decreed or confirmed by the Minister or consented to by the universities themselves. Prior to 1974, the advisory bodies to the Minister on university matters were more akin to an extension of the Ministry than independent advisory bodies. Having been given responsibility for advising on the public funds to be allocated by the Province for universities, the Ontario Council on University Affairs had a context within which to undertake “arms-length” consultation, and promote coordination and planning to a greater degree than its predecessors.

J. Stefan Dupré, a Professor of Political Economy at the University of Toronto, selected to be the Council’s first Chair, had among other things, been a staff member of the Ontario Committee on Taxation in 1967. This report, which had advocated the virtues of decentralization while embracing the importance of strong provincial governments and autonomous local and community institutions, clearly provided a frame of reference for Dupré’s views on university autonomy. The Committee on Taxation had argued that fiscal autonomy for the provinces was desirable because it recognized diversity and “it is indispensable to ensure that the responsibilities of (provincial) governments will be clearly

349. The Honourable J.A.C. Auld, Minister of Colleges and Universities, *Legislature of Ontario Debates, Estimates, Ministry of Colleges and Universities, Standing Social Development Committee, Thursday, May 30, 1974*, quoted in Trotter *et al.*, *op cit.*, p. 36.

pinpointed in the public mind.”³⁵⁰ The degree to which Dupre’s experience with the Committee had informed his views on university autonomy were evident in his convocation address to McMaster University in 1977, where he stated:

The Ontario Committee on Taxation accorded great importance to the effective decentralization of authority to the local and community level, citing the same values of diversity and responsibility as caused it to espouse the enlargement of provincial autonomy. On the basis of my recent experience in chairing the body that is responsible for advising our provincial government on policy toward universities, I believe that the Government of Ontario has succeeded in maintaining, despite occasional pressures to the contrary, a fair degree of university autonomy. This is not to say, however, that the challenge of decentralization has been fully met even at the university level. In that we can expect the Government of Ontario to gain added responsibility with yet a further advancement of provincial autonomy, the need to decentralize in turn below the provincial level is pressing. I believe that this should include further delegation of decision-making in the university realm.³⁵¹

The Deputy Minister of Colleges and Universities at the time was J. Gordon Parr, originally from the university community, and more recently Chairman of the Committee on University Affairs. Parr had come with “a deep and personal understanding of the hallowed principles of academic freedom as well as institutional autonomy” and understood “the limits that had to be subtly and carefully observed and honoured if public expenditures of the magnitude to which they had recently grown could be justified by the government”³⁵² It was, therefore, not surprising that the better part of OCUA’s early years were spent working with the institutions and government to encourage the institutions, individually and collectively, to assume responsibility for system-level coordination and planning.

350. J. Stefan Dupré, “Convocation Address”, McMaster University, May 28, 1977, p. 3.

351. *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

352. Benson A. Wilson, *op cit.*, p. 2.

3.6.1 System-Level Academic Program Coordination and Planning, 1974-1982: OCUA's Role in the Promotion of a University "System" and Institutional Role Differentiation

In its 1977 *Fourth Annual Report*, OCUA noted that the physical capacity problems in the university system, which had been anticipated due to projected enrolment growth, were unlikely to transpire. In fact, OCUA, now chaired by William C. Winegard, former President of the University of Guelph, noted that actual enrolment likely would fall short of the peak in the lowest forecast it had made for the period from 1978 to 1982-83. Hearings with the universities undertaken by OCUA were concerned with institutional funding requirements and the way in which institutions were planning to "cope with 'the new reality'...[of] three years of financing below the level that we have come to expect".³⁵³ This "new reality" was brought about by the government's paper "Towards a Balanced Budget" which was contained in the document "Ontario Budget 1977", introduced in the Legislature by the Treasurer of Ontario that spring. Greater system-wide coordination was clearly one strategy OCUA was exploring as a means to reduce university sector costs. One of the questions posed by OCUA to the institutions during OCUA public hearings that year was:

With restricted funding and declining enrolment upon us, are savings possible by the merging of one institution with another or through the merging of certain specific services such as libraries, computing, campus planning, other administrative support services and even teaching in geographically proximate institutions (or indeed system wide)?³⁵⁴

In a discussion paper issued in 1978, *The Ontario University System: A Statement of Issues*, OCUA observed that universities were entering a period of declining enrolment and

353. Ontario Council on University Affairs, "Text of Letter to Executive Heads Concerning 1978 Briefs to OCUA", *Fourth Annual Report, 1977-78*, October 7, 1977, p. 13.

354. *Ibid.*

resources which required careful management. In this context, OCUA enunciated explicit goals for the university system in Ontario, noting that "Council deliberately uses the word "system" in this context because different universities may fulfil different roles to accomplish the total task of the university sector."³⁵⁵

In view of anticipated funding reductions, OCUA assessed the academic implications and concluded that the quality of the undergraduate enterprise could be sustained at an acceptable level. However, the graduate program enterprise, which differed "from other areas of university affairs in that its evolution has been characterized by a degree of control not found elsewhere",³⁵⁶ was given particular attention.

Of concern to OCUA in 1978 was that:

...graduate rationalization and disciplinary evolution have been considered in isolation. Council believes that future rationalization and planned evolution must take into account the interaction between the graduate and undergraduate sectors and the institutional profiles which thus emerge.³⁵⁷

In response to this concern, OCUA promoted the concept of rationalization through institutional role differentiation. Citing its belief that considerable institutional differentiation already existed in Ontario, OCUA went on to state: "Council believes that there remains some scope for increased role differentiation among the universities based on disciplinary emphasis and level and range of instructional offerings."³⁵⁸ OCUA identified four categories of institutions ranging from institutions oriented primarily toward undergraduate arts and science, with few, if any, undergraduate professional programs and no graduate programs, to

355. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

356. *Ibid.*, p. 31.

357. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

358. *Ibid.*, p. 35.

institutions which offered a broad range of programs at all levels of instruction.³⁵⁹ In setting up the discussion of institutional role differentiation, OCUA stated its belief in the importance "for all concerned to keep a watching brief on the extent to which a balance is maintained between public accountability and institutional autonomy."³⁶⁰

As for its role in maintaining this balance, OCUA took the question of current system-level structures and controls to the university system in its 1979 public hearings where it explored the difficulties of an intermediary body providing leadership to the university system without even limited executive authority and the severe limitations placed on COU's ability to provide system leadership while at the same time being accountable to differing vested interests.³⁶¹ After consultation with the Ontario universities in the Spring of 1979, the paper *System on the Brink: A Financial Analysis of the Ontario University System 1979* reflected OCUA's position on coordination and planning in an unequivocal fashion: "Council is now, more than ever, convinced that planning in one institution cannot be divorced from planning in the system as a whole."³⁶²

In spite of its earlier concerns about undergraduate development, OCUA continued to emphasize planning and coordination in the areas of graduate and professional programming. In 1980, OCUA indicated that there was a need for system-wide consolidation and rationalization in Ontario. In its position paper *System Rationalization: A Responsibility and An Opportunity*, OCUA stated that such measures were required

359. *Ibid.*, see p. 35 for details.

360. *Ibid.*, p. 41.

361. Ontario Council on University Affairs, "Autonomy and Control: Structural Alternatives", *Fifth Annual Report 1978-79*, March 1979, pp. 41-43.

362. *Ibid.*, "Introduction", p. 9.

particularly in the context of financial constraint and enrolment decline, to prevent and eliminate undesirable duplication in order to protect existing strong programs, to preserve opportunities for innovation, and to ensure that resources be effectively used and available in areas of need.³⁶³

OCUA's efforts to broaden the planning context were frustrated by the sector's indifference to it. OCUA attributed this to the universities' assumption that "somehow or other, an acceptable total provincial array of programs would follow automatically from the sum of the plans of each institution."³⁶⁴ OCUA summarized the dilemma as follows:

With many institutions involved in the system it may be that, without any coordinating effort, the outcomes of the independently drawn plans of the individual institutions may not be appropriate from a provincial perspective. Indeed, this is precisely the situation which the university system in Ontario is beginning to face. While there is general agreement that it is desirable to leave as much planning responsibility as possible in the hands of the individual institutions, it is becoming increasingly clear that some degree of coordination and cooperation is necessary.³⁶⁵

OCUA indicated that planning for the future must be based on two fundamental premises: (1) that there was a university *system* in Ontario; and (2) that there must be a developing recognition by all institutions of the *role of each institution* within the system. OCUA argued that once roles were established, each institution should act in a manner consistent with that role within the system and base its plans for the future on its existing strengths. New developments should be channelled to meet system needs *where institutional strengths exist*.

The Long-Range Planning Committee of the Council of Ontario Universities, while lacking any concrete suggestions on how to proceed, had been driven in its report to the same

363. Ontario Council on University Affairs, "System Rationalization: A Responsibility and An Opportunity". *Seventh Annual Report, 1980-81*, p. 45.

364. *Ibid.*

365. *Ibid.*

conclusion as OCUA - unchecked competition was neither in the long-term interests of the institutions nor society. The Committee had come to this conclusion based on its analysis of institutional prospects in the face of enrolment fluctuations. The Committee stated:

When universities are obliged to compete for budgetary support by competing for students, unfortunately, autonomy may show its darker side; for individual institutions may well feel driven, in the interest of their own survival, to adopt policies and practices that may benefit themselves but be damaging to the system as a whole. And as now constituted, OCUA and COU are powerless to alter institutional policies, practices and decisions, in the interest of the whole system, except in graduate and professional programs. The unacknowledged truth is that although the word "system" is commonly used, and is used in this report, it is largely a misnomer.³⁶⁶

At the same time as OCUA and the university community were engaged in a discussion of broad issues of system coordination and planning and institutional role differentiation, they were also trying to develop more specific mechanisms for graduate program coordination and planning. OCUA's efforts to increase program coordination and planning and to introduce a process of "sectoral planning" are discussed in detail in Chapter 5. In addition, it should be noted that from the beginning, OCUA played a pivotal role in introducing a series of modifications to the university funding formula that desensitized funding levels in relation to fluctuations in enrolment. Such measures facilitated institutional planning despite variations in enrolment.

The next section examines a number of Ministry-led initiatives which reflect a gradual decline in the Ministry's confidence in "collective autonomy" and a willingness on the part of the Minister to see government, and later, OCUA, play a larger role in ensuring a coordinated and planned university system.

366. Council of Ontario Universities, "Numbers in the Clouds: A Discussion of Enrolment Problems for the 1980's by the Long-Range Planning Committee", July 15, 1980, pp. 14-15.

3.7 The Search for Structure: A Debate on the Roles of Government and Universities in System Coordination and Planning in Ontario, 1980-1990

By the 1980's, the interests of the government and those of the institutions, which were so parallel during the post-war expansion period, had significantly diverged. Universities believed that the government had been unresponsive to legitimate concerns about underfunding, particularly as it affected the quality of education. The government believed that universities had willfully failed to develop appropriate policies which would enable them to cope with the present-day financial constraints. In addition, the quality of the dialogue was frustrated by the narrowness of existing policies, which were not designed to deal effectively with the issues of system coordination that the universities were facing. As the University of Western Ontario noted:

One of the major factors contributing to the inability of universities to meet government's expectations is the fact that, in spite of apparent freedom, current funding and governance rules severely constrain the responsible decisions of individual institutions. Where concerted action by many institutions is required to bring about a desired result, it is usually the case that each institution would see itself as being better off if the other institutions came to a mutual understanding, while it continued to act in its own best interests. ...[T]his situation is most clearly illustrated by the problems facing universities planning to reduce enrolment in particular programs. If one institution maintained its enrolment while all others reduced theirs, the non-co-operating institution would reap both the benefits of the overall increase in BIU value caused by the enrolment drop at the other institutions, and the benefit of having maintained its own enrolment. Since this argument in favour of letting others reduce enrolment while maintaining or even increasing your own is so compelling, few institutions have been able to resist it. Only where counter-balancing arguments of unique concern to a particular institution are equally compelling have such adjustments been made, often to the delight and always to the financial benefit of the other institutions in the province. In general, the likelihood of all or even most universities acting in a concerted manner to bring about a desired result for the system is very low.

...[T]he financial rewards associated with undertaking particular actions in the service of system-level goals is inadequate. The fundamental flaw in the current incentive structure is that there is an inherent advantage to the other institutions if one institution undertakes [downward] adjustments. To escape

this flaw requires a permanent funding mechanism that, within reasonable bounds, uncouples funding from on-going program and enrolment adjustments. In turn, such a system could work only if an independent agency were created with the authority to approve funding changes arising from program and enrolment adjustments.³⁶⁷

Enrolment levels and projections, considered critically important in Ontario were also changing with important financial ramifications. Public support to universities was allocated on the basis of institutional enrolments. Despite various modifications to the allocative formula to lessen the sensitivity of the allocative mechanism to enrolment fluctuation, competition for students continued to guide institutional behaviour. The institutions' primary source of students - the high schools - would graduate a declining number of students in the 1980s. Yet, at the same time as institutions expected this to translate into a decline in university enrolments, postsecondary participation rates began to increase unexpectedly, first gradually, and then more rapidly.³⁶⁸

Changes within the Ministry responsible for universities would also influence developments in the 1980s. Following the conclusion of William G. Davis's leadership of the Ministry in 1972, four different ministers responsible for Colleges and Universities came and went in rapid succession, with few of them even serving a complete year. A single Minister, Harry Parrott, "albeit a junior member of Cabinet, holding his first portfolio",³⁶⁹ brought a semblance of continuity to the stewardship of provincial university policy from 1975 to mid-1978. However, it was not until Bette Stephenson was appointed Minister in late summer of

367. University of Western Ontario, "Section II: Response to Major Issues raised in OU 1984", mimeograph, p. 12.

368. In 1983, the participation rate of the traditional "university age" population of 18-24 year old Ontarians appeared to be in the range of 15.6%, the highest in Canada and well above the Canadian average of 13.5%. Ontario universities had also experienced an increase in the proportion of non-traditional students in the over 25 age group. By 1982-83, this group represented 16 per cent of all full-time and 78 per cent of all part-time students in Ontario universities.

369. Benson Wilson, *op cit.*, p. 9.

1978, following a major Cabinet shuffle, that real potential for change existed. She was considered a senior Minister and was responsible for the combined portfolios of Education and Colleges and Universities.

Under Stephenson's supervision, in 1979 the two Ministries were merged. This too was a significant development. It brought the entire publicly funded education system together under one roof physically, if not philosophically. A senior Ministry official describes the two schools of thought:

The people that had been part of MCU before the merger, the Ben Wilsons [former Assistant Deputy Minister] [and] Rodger Cummins [former Director] had an abiding respect for autonomy and a feeling that one couldn't do a better job of managing the system from the Mowat Block than the institutions could do themselves. It was our job to make sure that general government objectives for the universities were achieved by giving institutions more money and setting the broad policy frameworks for them, making sure that the way we distributed operating grants was helpful, but didn't attempt to micro-manage things. There was definitely some conflicting approaches between Fisher [the new Deputy Minister of the merged Ministry] and Ben and Rodger, who had been senior people [in MCU] who were around a long time. The current Deputy Minister...Harry Fisher, who came up from the school boards, from the Education side of things, did not share the reverence for autonomy. There was more of an interest in treating universities like school boards. There was shock and surprise that the operating grant wasn't enshrined in regulation like the school boards. We were asked to convert the operating grants manual to a regulation that had to be changed every year. There was the deficits legislation [introduced in 1982, but never passed], that provided for, in effect, a Ministry takeover of universities that were running deficits that we deemed to be excessive. There was that kind of interest in looking over the shoulders of boards of governors and senior administrators. ...[G]overnment was rethinking the traditional approach to its relationship with the universities...³⁷⁰

The merging of responsibility for universities and education resulted in an influx of elementary-secondary policy values and perspectives, rooted in central control of the education system, into the university policy environment which began to shift the balance in government-

370. Interview with Senior Ministry Official, April 10, 1997.

university relations toward a greater role for the Ministry in university matters. This, combined with the Ministerial stability after the appointment of Bette Stephenson in 1978, facilitated a concerted, Ministry-led push for greater university sector coordination during that period.

Against the backdrop of a series of attempts to align the costs of a university sector expected to provide “open door accessibility” with declining increases in public resources (which the universities and OCUA claimed would render the accessibility objective unattainable),³⁷¹ and a perceived combination of reluctance and inability on the part of the universities to address the issues of constraint or retrenchment collectively, the government initiated yet another inquiry with respect to the appropriate fiscal and policy framework for future university development. This one would be chaired by the Deputy Minister of Colleges and Universities, Harry K. Fisher.

3.7.1 Committee on the Future Role of Universities in Ontario, 1981 (Fisher Committee)

As OCUA was discussing program-related system rationalization and sectoral planning with the university community, concerns of the provincial cabinet and university presidents about related system-level issues resulted in the establishment in November 1980, of the Committee on the Future Role of Universities in Ontario. In late August 1980 the Premier, William G. Davis,³⁷² had met with the Board Chairmen and Executive Heads of the Ontario universities to discuss concerns about their “worsening financial plight”. The Premier

371. It is important to note that during this period, universities were complaining that the level of increases year over year was declining. While declining relative to increases in inflation, university funding from government was still increasing in total dollars on a year over year basis.

372. In mid-1972 William G. Davis, Minister of Education, became party leader and Premier of the Province. Davis expressed an ongoing interest in university affairs throughout his Premiership.

listened, and then asked the Executive heads to provide him with a brief on what should be done about the situation. On November 5, 1980 the Chair of the Committee of Executive Heads of Ontario Universities responded with a document representing a broad consensus among the executive heads “worked out in a series of lengthy meetings held by them during the course of September and October.” They had not had time to have COU, governing boards or Senates of individual universities review the document. On November 14, 1980 the Premier, the Minister, Dr. Bette Stephenson, George Connell, President of the University of Western Ontario, Edward Monahan, Executive Director of COU, and Ronald Watts, Principal of Queen’s University and Chair, Committee of Executive Heads of Ontario Universities, met to discuss this brief.

The Presidents argued that, in view of the Premier’s public endorsement in 1979 of goals for the Ontario university system as set out by OCUA in 1978,³⁷³ these goals needed to be specified “in more precise operational terms than they have been in the past” in order to measure effectively the degree to which they could be achieved with the public funding provided.³⁷⁴ It was in fact the view of OCUA and the Presidents that it was currently impossible for the universities to meet the publicly endorsed objectives, and that despite the Premier’s statement that it was not public policy to close any universities, some smaller institutions were close to the threshold below which they would be unable to sustain academic and financial viability. Between 1970-71 and 1979-80, the operating grant plus tuition fees per

373. The OCUA objectives were:
1. To develop a more educated populace;
2. To educate and train people for the professions;
3. To provide for study at the highest intellectual level;
4. To conduct basic and applied research, including development and evaluation; and
5. To provide service to the community.

374. Committee of Executive Heads of Ontario Universities, “The Situation of Ontario Universities”, November 5, 1980, p. 2.

full-time equivalent student in constant dollar terms had fallen by 13.2 percent and should that trend be continued, universities feared a further annual erosion in constant dollar terms of 2 to 3 percent annually. Given that 80 percent of institutional budgets are devoted to salaries, the economies required would have to involve a major reduction of academic and support staff. The Presidents noted on the one hand that: "To undertake such a process rationally would involve a conscious identification and selection of activities and services to be reduced without compromising other objectives significantly." On the other hand, they argued against such decisions being undertaken by bodies external to the institutions:

In the interest of academic freedom and vitality, regulation of the universities should be kept to the minimum necessary to ensure accountability of the institutions in meeting public needs.³⁷⁵

The Presidents identified three options for government action:

1. In the absence of any public policy relating funding levels to clearly articulated objectives, the universities could continue to attempt year by year adjustments to annual shortfalls in funding, as was done during the latter part of the 1970s. This, they argued, would lead to a major decline in educational quality, and research capacity and threaten the very survival of some smaller institutions.
2. Increased government grants, tuition fees and increased private support could be provided to enable the universities to meet public expectations and obviate the need for a reduction in scale. This, they indicated, was their preferred option.
3. The Ontario university system could be "compressed" in stages to a state in which the government's objects, and the costs of providing services would be reduced to conform to the level of funding available. This option, they argued, although surely a painful and difficult step to take, would be preferable to the persistent erosion of quality which would otherwise occur.³⁷⁶

The difficulty, they noted, would lie in the need to suspend, at least for a transitional period, the statutory authority of some or all of the universities:

375. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

376. *Ibid.*, pp. 8-10.

The government would, presumably with appropriate consultation, have to decide upon a plan of action and set in place through legislation an authority with powers to implement the plan in order to override the existing legislation establishing autonomous institutions.³⁷⁷

The Presidents rejected a centralized authority approach, noting the high price paid in terms of cumbersome bureaucratic inefficiency and lack of local academic flexibility and vitality.

As a result of this meeting, the Premier and the Minister agreed to undertake a review of the role of universities and government in planning the future of universities in Ontario. In a “leaked” description of the undertaking, the Ontario Council on University Affairs was perceived not to be included in the groups to be specifically represented in the review. As noted by the Assistant Deputy Minister of the day:

A firestorm of reaction ensued, first manifesting itself at the installation ceremony for the new president of McMaster University....In the robing room ahead of the ceremony, the Assistant Deputy Minister, unbriefed on the announcement was pounced upon by a gaggle of presidents and OCUA members. During the speeches associated with the ceremony, the Ontario president representing the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada [Alan Earp, President of Brock University] saw fit to add some highly critical comments about the announcement to his words of greeting...During the course of the following week, delicate negotiations brought in significant changes in the proposed membership of the task force and the role of OCUA in it, but considerable long-term damage was done by the ill-timed and inappropriate announcement.³⁷⁸

On November 18, 1980, the Minister of Colleges and Universities, Dr. Bette Stephenson stated:

...the executive Heads suggested there should be a study of the role of the Ontario universities and of the relationship between the universities, the Council of Ontario Universities, the Ontario Council on University Affairs and the government. I am pleased to report that the government has agreed to this suggestion and that a broadly-based committee will be struck to study the role

377. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

378. Benson A. Wilson, *op cit.*, p. 18.

of universities in Ontario.³⁷⁹

A subsequent statement to the Legislature of November 28, 1980 cited the terms of reference for the Committee and indicated that it would be chaired by the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, Harry K. Fisher, assisted by a committee of thirteen members possessing system-wide and institutional experience.³⁸⁰ The Committee's terms of reference stressed the development of objectives for Ontario universities for the 1980s and the associated funding levels required; modifications to the funding mechanism which would encourage voluntary institutional adjustments and inter-institutional co-operation to meet the objectives; and the development of more clearly defined roles for OCUA, COU and the Ontario government.

In its preliminary report, the Committee had clearly accepted the university presidents' strategy to box the government in by using the goals for the system as leverage for additional funding - the "you get what you pay for" argument. The Committee dutifully compared the cost of funding universities at a level necessary to ensure their ability to meet the publicly approved objectives for the sector. It concluded that in order to meet the established objectives for the university system as developed by OCUA in 1978, significant additional funds were required. Should funding increases to the university sector not be made available, the Committee concluded that public policy objectives would be compromised. If, the Committee

379. The Honourable Bette Stephenson, Minister of Colleges and Universities, *Legislature of Ontario Debates/Hansard*, Tuesday, November 18, 1980, p. 4373.

380. Dr. Bette Stephenson, Minister of Colleges and Universities, Statement to the Legislature, November 28, 1980. Other members of the Committee on the Future Role of Universities in Ontario were: R.J. Butler, Secretary, Management Board of Cabinet; G.E. Connell, President, University of Western Ontario; J.S. Dupré, University of Toronto; M.L. Hamilton, Executive Vice-President, Thomson Newspaper Ltd.; G.A. Harrower, President, Lakehead University; A.R. Marchment, Chair, Guaranty Trust Co. Of Canada; M.S. Paikin, Director, Southam Inc.; M.L. Pilkington, Professor, York University; R.P. Riggan, Senior Vice-President, Noranda Mines Ltd.; R.L. Watts, Principal, Queen's University; B.A. Wilson, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Colleges and Universities; and W.C. Winegard, Chair, Ontario Council on University Affairs. Secretary of the Committee - R.L. Cummins. Resource Person - E.J. Monahan.

concluded, funding levels fell below the level of inflation: "the objectives...cannot be met; and quality can be salvaged only through increasingly drastic measures whose outcome is a commensurately inaccessible, elite and small Ontario university system".³⁸¹

With respect to structures for coordination and planning, once again, the prospect of the universities managing related processes themselves under the auspices of COU was raised and dismissed. The Committee noted that COU "is never in a good position to referee or to settle disputes between or among its members", and that in the past "attempts by COU to assume such a role led to misunderstandings and suspicion among member institutions and a general weakening of the council".³⁸² The Committee concluded that as a voluntary association of autonomous institutions, COU "...cannot easily adopt policies that are judged contrary to the interests of any of its members; and if it does adopt such policies, it cannot enforce them."³⁸³ Even if COU could restructure itself, the Committee concluded frankly, it was not the appropriate locus for decision-making responsibilities on behalf of the system: "...any such body representing the universities would not likely be accepted by government or by the public as credible when making decisions in which its members clearly were interested parties."³⁸⁴

The Committee indicated a preference for a strengthened OCUA which would be responsible for overall coordination and planning, particularly in the area of academic programming.³⁸⁵ However, if funding levels were highly unfavourable for universities, the

381. The Committee on the Future Role of Universities in Ontario, *The Challenge of the '80s*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, March 1981, p. 32.

382. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

383. *Ibid.*

384. *Ibid.*

385. *Ibid.*, pp. 43-44

Committee warned that:

There are limits, however, on the ability of any advisory body to cope with a university system under severe fiscal restraint. ...it is unlikely than any degree of incremental change, including direct ministerial control, would suffice. At such levels of funding, legislative intervention - whether to effect institutional closure or similar serious measures - could not be avoided.³⁸⁶

The Committee observed that government-university relations were closely linked with the issue of funding levels, stating: "The more severe the financial constraints, the more likely central intervention becomes."³⁸⁷ COU's response to this perspective was highly critical:

There is no doubt that the worse the outlook, the harder will be the decisions which must be taken. But it does not necessarily follow that those decisions should be taken centrally. Over the past few years, the universities have adapted, albeit with difficulty, to significant underfunding without central direction. We are not convinced that the outcome is a system of lower quality than might have been achieved through system planning with centralized executive authority.³⁸⁸

The majority of universities argued for an autonomous, adaptive and decentralized system. Ryerson Polytechnic Institute and the University of Toronto took the opposite view. The University of Toronto argued: "The existence of a plan with clear objectives and priorities would make it possible to have a coherent and co-ordinated university system without a large, central hierarchy of control."³⁸⁹ The Committee concluded that "some planning of the system is necessary."³⁹⁰

The 30 recommendations released in 1981 final report were largely tied to the issue of funding levels. The Fisher Committee indicated that the current roles of government, the

386. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

387. The Committee on the Future Role of Universities in Ontario, *The Report of the Committee on the Future Role of Universities in Ontario*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, July 1981, p. 30.

388. *Ibid.*, citing COU.

389. *Ibid.*, citing the University of Toronto.

390. *Ibid.*

institutions, OCUA and COU could be maintained with some modifications. According to the Committee, the role of government, in addition to making basic decisions on matters reflecting the public interest and expressing public policy, with advice on policy implications from OCUA and COU, included the following responsibilities:

- establishing general objectives for the publicly-funded universities
- deciding the amounts of public funds to be provided for operating and capital purposes, and the reporting and audit requirements necessary to satisfy government's accountability standards
- determining the number and nature of institutions to be supported
- determining the total number of students to be provided for
- setting general tuition fee guidelines and, as a corollary, the level of public student assistance, and
- establishing government's manpower and research priorities and policies.³⁹¹

The Committee argued that the institutions also had a number of specific responsibilities to fulfil if Ontario was to have a "system" of essentially decentralized, academically autonomous institutions. Institutional responsibilities included:

- ...responsibility for...institutional planning within the framework of...[government] objectives for and the traditional role of the universities...[which] entails the vigorous pursuit of differing roles for the institutions, based on their particular strengths.
- ...making all the critical academic decisions, particularly those involved in who shall teach, what shall be taught, and who shall be taught.
- ...ensuring the quality and integrity of their programs whether they are of instruction, research, or community service.³⁹²

With respect to the Ontario Council on University Affairs, the Committee defined for it a "minimum essential role" described as follows: "to advise government from time to time

391. *Ibid.*, p. 31.

392. *Ibid.*

on overall objectives for the university system, to recommend broad policies that will enable universities to meet the objectives, and to monitor the performance of universities in this regard."³⁹³ The Committee recommended that certain aspects of the role of OCUA be modified or given greater emphasis. For example, with respect to program authorization, it was recommended that OCUA's advice be generated with the assistance of an academic advisory body and COU. OCUA would continue to promote the concept of individualized and differing roles for each institution, encouraging institutions to build upon strengths and promote program specialization.

The Committee advocated that the Council of Ontario Universities continue its role of exchanging information and assisting in the formulation of policy and, at the graduate level, make quality control the primary objective of graduate planning. To this end, the Committee recommended that the appraisals process should be strengthened and reviews should be periodic. Further inter-university co-operation was also identified as something COU should pursue. This would include measures to facilitate faculty and staff transfers, pension portability, and faculty access to research facilities in other institutions.

The Committee concluded in the final report that, even with sufficient funding, to ensure that the existing institutions and structures would be adequate to manage the coordination and planning of the system, change was necessary. Clearly defined institutional roles, revised allocative practices, and modified roles for OCUA and COU were changes that were expected to "come through evolution of the system with the aid of the normal consultative mechanisms already in place."³⁹⁴ However, if funding levels were significantly

393. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

394. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

lower, massive restructuring would be required and “no amount of tinkering with current structures will be satisfactory”. In the event that the government did not accept that additional funds were required, alternative options were listed which included:

- reducing the number of universities;
- changing the character of some or all of the universities and limiting their range of activity;
- grouping universities in two or more categories with different missions by category.

In the event that sufficient funding was not provided, the Committee predicted:

Ontario would have one comprehensive university..., not more than four full-service universities offering a more restricted range of ...programs at all degree levels...[and] four or five special-purpose institutions...Of the remaining institutions, some may have to be closed, and the others...restructured. These institutions would offer high-quality undergraduate instruction in arts and science and perhaps the early years of programs in high demand...³⁹⁵

The Committee recognized that these measures would require significant direct government intervention resulting in legislative changes to the Acts of the institutions in order to restrict the range and level of programs they offered. The Committee believed that, once restructured, a more limited system could function well composed of “basically autonomous institutions operating within clearly defined limits.”³⁹⁶

The government received the *Report of the Committee on the Future Role of Universities in Ontario* in mid-July 1981. It had been anticipated that the *Report* would assist the government in reconciling the publicly endorsed objectives for Ontario universities with the levels of public funding available to universities for the achievement of these objectives. However, the Committee’s final report, advocating as it did increased priority on universities

395. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

396. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

and commensurate increases in funding levels in order to maintain quality, was not the prescription the government was looking for. In fact, politically, the position taken by the Committee was considered an act of “hara-kiri” by some.³⁹⁷ The powerful Policy and Priorities Board of Cabinet was extremely sceptical of the Committee’s recommendations, convinced that no university should be closed and that unit funding for universities could continue to be reduced if it was done at a slow and consistent rate.³⁹⁸ Such was the degree of political scepticism about universities requiring additional funding that the Committee’s basic assumptions on funding levels were a complete non-starter with Cabinet.³⁹⁹ Furthermore, had the government accepted the restructuring recommendation, it would have been an implicit admission of having provided inadequate funding levels to accomplish its own stated objectives. The recommendations also required the introduction of new legislation which would be subject to intense criticism by the opposition of both government funding policies and funding levels. Not to be overlooked was the regional and local political damage which would ensue from any attempt to limit or eliminate particular institutions.

On the issue of institutional closure, a senior ministry official recalls:

Cabinet...[wasn't] prepared to close down any institutions. We went through the whole exercise, you can merge Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier, and...Confederation and Lakehead to create a polytechnic...and there was absolutely no political will to...intervene to that degree...the Premier had absolutely no interest in doing that.⁴⁰⁰

In the end, the *Report of the Committee on the Future Role of Universities in Ontario* had no supporters whatsoever. Even Harry Fisher, the Committee chair, repudiated the report the day

397. Benson A. Wilson, *op cit.*, p. 23.

398. *Ibid.*

399. Interview with Bette Stephenson, April 11, 1997.

400. Interview with Senior Ministry Official, April 10, 1997.

it was released.⁴⁰¹ As then Minister Bette Stephenson explained:

The Fisher Report tried to find ways in which ... [university expenditures could] match the rate of inflation...and finally came to the conclusion that what we really should do is close a couple of universities and get on with spending the rest of the money in the appropriate way for the rest of them ... But they really didn't do it in an imaginative kind of way. They were looking at the same old mechanisms modified slightly or band-aided slightly... and as a result, everybody hated the report. Absolutely everybody. Harry wasn't satisfied with it. He thought it was terrible and everybody else did as well, so it just went on the shelf.⁴⁰²

Uninspired by the “future roles” for universities envisioned by the Fisher Committee, and facing a lack of government confidence in the universities’ ability to manage themselves appropriately in an environment of financial restraint, the Ministry quickly set about to revise the funding formula to desensitize further the allocation mechanism to enrolment fluctuations while government undertook to appoint another commission to look ahead on its behalf, rephrasing the question this time to focus on the “future development” of the provincially-assisted universities.

In December 1983, Minister Bette Stephenson informed the Legislature of the government’s intention to appoint a commission, which would become known as The Commission on the Future Development of the Universities of Ontario. This commission, she explained, would be expected to produce “a detailed operational plan... a plan of action”⁴⁰³ that would effect changes in the university system involving defined, distinctive roles for each university, professional program rationalization and the “possible separation of research

401. Interview with Edward Monahan, April 10, 1997.

402. Interview with Bette Stephenson, April 11, 1997.

403. The Honourable Bette Stephenson, Minister of Colleges and Universities, *Legislature of Ontario Debates/Hansard*, December 15, 1981, p. 4187.

funding from instructional funding.”⁴⁰⁴ The Minister formally signalled government’s intention to “to exercise leadership by way of short-term intervention in the planning process.”⁴⁰⁵ While the commissioners who were later appointed to undertake the review moderated this mandate somewhat when they finalized their terms of reference, the Minister’s remarks in the Legislature strongly signalled that government believed that change was required.⁴⁰⁶

In view of the “unsatisfactory” nature of the dialogue between universities and government, frequently mediated by OCUA,⁴⁰⁷ and OCUA’s full agenda⁴⁰⁸ the government’s advisory body was “benched” once again while the policy framework underwent reconsideration.

3.7.2 *The Commission on the Future Development of the Universities of Ontario, 1984 (Bovey Commission)*

Commissioners Edmund C. Bovey (Chair), J. Fraser Mustard and Ronald L. Watts,⁴⁰⁹ were appointed in January 1984 to lead The Commission on the Future Development of the Universities of Ontario. The Commission had a very broad mandate - to examine ways to “better enable the universities of Ontario to adjust to changing social and economic conditions” while strengthening “...their ability to contribute to the intellectual, economic,

404. *Ibid.*

405. *Ibid.*, pp. 4188-4189.

406. Interview. Senior Ministry Official, April 10, 1997.

407. University of Western Ontario, “Response to Major Issues raised in OU 1984,” mimeograph, p. 11.

408. At the time, OCUA was preparing advice on program approvals, fees, incremental costs of bilingualism and graduate planning. See The Honourable Bette Stephenson, Minister of Colleges and Universities, *Legislature of Ontario Debates/Hansard*, December 15, 1981, p. 4187.

409. Edmund C. Bovey was a widely respected industrialist and arts advocate; J. Fraser Mustard, a founding member of OCUA, was President of the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research and former Vice-President Health Sciences, McMaster University; and Ronald L. Watts was Principal and Vice-Chancellor of Queen’s University.

social and cultural foundations of society...” within the context of “...fiscal restraint and prudent management of public funds.”⁴¹⁰ The Commission was directed to

...develop an operational plan which, without reducing the number of universities ... provides for more clearly defined, different and distinctive roles for the universities of Ontario in order to maintain and enhance the quality of university education by ensuring the appropriate concentration of academic strengths in areas of intellectual and social importance...⁴¹¹

The Commissioners were instructed to consider the designation of specific universities as centres of specialization with a view to preserving and developing further a caliber of teaching and research of national and international excellence; the most effective use of technological delivery; accessibility in the context of differentiated institutions; and the appropriate method of distributing provincial operating grants. The Commission was also directed to "consider the need for mechanisms for regulation, coordination and the provision of advice to the Government, and in particular to clarify the role of the Ontario Council on University Affairs in the context of a new and differentiated university structure."⁴¹²

Challenges facing the universities of Ontario at that time included: slowed economic growth and associated reductions in public funding available for new projects or expansion, increasing demands for specialized research and development, a demand for highly qualified manpower in special areas, a need for faculty renewal in the context of a faculty distribution skewed in favour of aging faculty, funding arrangements which did not adequately reflect the different functions of the universities and rising university participation rates that more than off-set demographic declines. The Commission issued a discussion paper in June 1984, published a number of background studies, conducted public hearings and received over 150

410. The Commission on the Future Development of the Universities of Ontario, *Ontario Universities: Options and Futures*, Toronto, December 1984, "Terms of Reference".

411. *Ibid.*

412. *Ibid.*

briefs. Its review focused essentially on four issues: quality, accessibility, adaptability and balance/differentiation.

Styled a “strategic plan of action,” the final report, submitted in December 1984, was entitled *Ontario Universities: Options and Futures*. The title reflected the Commission’s view that government’s support of its universities was akin to an investment decision that would “yield positive returns” to the economy and society. The Commission made 51 recommendations and provided six appendices that described the workings of its more technical recommendations. While noting “the need to reconcile different perceptions and divergent interests among the various members of the university community”, the report ultimately reflected the Commission’s conclusion that of “over-riding concern must be the importance to the Province of Ontario of a first-rate university system....”⁴¹³ effectively prioritizing quality over all other objectives.

While the Commission had been charged with the task of developing a “...plan of action to better enable the universities of Ontario to adjust to changing social and economic conditions without reducing the number of institutions” what it produced was less of a plan than then Minister Bette Stephenson expected. However, she explains, perhaps that was too much to expect:

...you should never expect from a commission a true operational plan because they are not geared that way. They did not have the staff to work out the details. What they were really doing...was developing the philosophical base for the kind of plan which could in fact be implemented. ...I think they provided the materials and...we could have gone forward with it...⁴¹⁴

The Commission recommended enhancing institutional differentiation through

413. *Ibid.*

414. Interview with Bette Stephenson, April 11, 1997.

evolution within a competitive context rather than by formal designation and central control. It sought to emphasize quality in teaching and research, and proposed a "differential corridors plan to buffer enrolment variations so as to facilitate greater institutional flexibility." It also envisaged new approaches to funding resource-intensive research, and "a strengthened and reconstituted Ontario Council on University Affairs...,"⁴¹⁵ the intermediary body between government and the universities.

Recommendations for enhancing "institutional differentiation by a process of evolution within a competitive context rather than by formal designation and central control"⁴¹⁶ were deemed to be "key to the strategic plan of action presented". The Commission noted "the marked differentiation and diversity in approaches to undergraduate education, range of professional and graduate programs and research intensity that have developed, particularly within recent years, among Ontario universities."⁴¹⁷ However, by defining differentiation this way, and concluding that the institutions were already "well-differentiated", there was also less emphasis on the development of an "operational plan" for a more differentiated system.⁴¹⁸ While the Commission favoured a "competitive system within which institutions are rewarded for the distinctive functions they perform and the quality of their activities and in addition are provided with the capacity to be flexible and innovative...,"⁴¹⁹ it warned the system that:

415. *Ibid.*, In its June 1984 discussion paper, *Ontario Universities 1984: Issues and Alternatives*, the Bovey Commission asked respondents to choose "the most feasible" among eight alternative mechanisms for regulation, coordination and the provision of advice to the Government. The Commission found "the weight of institutional opinion and Council of Ontario Universities (COU) support" centering on its fourth option:

...an intermediary body which would take the form of a reconstituted and strengthened OCUA, shaping the system primarily by financial incentives and disincentives with an enlarged monitoring function and endowed with some specified regulatory powers to reconcile conflicting institutional aspirations. p. 30.

416. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

417. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

418. Ontario Council on University Affairs, "Overview of the Bovey Report", mimeograph, May 17, 1985, p. 5.1.

419. The Commission on the Future Development of the Universities of Ontario, *op cit.* p. 14.

to the degree that institutions claim the privileges of autonomy and proclaim the values of local initiative, they have a corresponding obligation to develop "planned capacity and role" statements at a level of detail sufficient to have some real operational bite or significance. Particularly important is the development of a capacity to conduct effective self-analysis of institutional operations. Vague "mission statements" which avoid hard decisions on priorities will simply not suffice. If universities cannot define for themselves distinctive roles, if their powers of response to change or their "institutional dynamics" are ineffective, inevitably there will be a demand for an external coordinating body to perform this task. "Government dynamics" will fill the vacuum.⁴²⁰

The Commission concluded that the success of Ontario universities and the "wide measure of public and community support for the work of the universities" observed by the Commission were attributed to the high degree of autonomy they enjoyed:

It is clear that the considerable measure of autonomy which Ontario universities have enjoyed by comparison with publicly funded institutions in most other jurisdictions has been a major factor in their vitality and achievement.⁴²¹

Yet, the Commission noted that there was "an urgent need for improvement in the arrangements facilitating inter-institutional planning and coordination"⁴²² and that the "introduction of new approaches to inter-institutional planning and coordination" would be critical to the implementation of the strategic thrusts of their recommendations for the development of Ontario universities during the 1980s and 1990s.

The Commissioners considered a variety of options for regulation and coordination of universities and provision of advice to the government on university matters that ranged from direct management by the Ministry to a deregulated approach driven by market forces. In the end, they recommended an intermediary body which would take the form of a reconstituted

420. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

421. *Ibid.*

422. *Ibid.*

and strengthened OCUA, shaping the system primarily by financial incentives and disincentives but with an enlarged monitoring function and endowed with some specified regulatory powers to reconcile conflicting institutional aspirations. The Commission argued that "current circumstances call for a stronger and clearer mandate and more effective capacity than now exists for overall system planning and coordination."⁴²³ It advocated a "planned capacities and roles" approach whereby system planning processes would begin with institutional initiatives to develop clear and specific statements of role and mission in the areas of teaching and research, as well as to identify in detail the institutional capacity to undertake such functions. It was recognized that some adjustments and reconciliations of individual planning processes would be required to reconcile conflicting institutional aspirations and to satisfy provincial interests. Noting that some adjustments could be effected by consultation between a system-wide planning authority and the individual universities in view of policy guidelines laid down by government, the Commission recognized that in the event that agreement did not ensue, the intermediary body must have a clear enough mandate and sufficient authority to resolve the remaining differences. In the Commission's view, the intermediary body "would for the most part develop system planning at a high level of generality, but in the case of certain professional programs or at the graduate level it would occasionally have to descend to more specific levels of decision making."⁴²⁴

423. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

424. *Ibid.*

The terms of reference for such an intermediary body, envisaged by the Commission, would be established in detail by order-in-council and include the following additions to the responsibilities of OCUA:⁴²⁵

- a mandate for periodic review and reconciliation of institutional role statements and associated plans for the development of instruction and research in the light of established provincial objectives;
- a mandate to ensure appropriate standards of program quality, especially at the graduate level, which involves monitoring the COU system of graduate program appraisals and, if necessary, establishing its own comparative appraisals process and method of reviewing the coherence of graduate programs in each institution;
- a mandate to initiate studies related to the long-term development of the university system;
- a mandate for an advisory committee structure which can draw heavily on relevant expertise in the universities and elsewhere, including an Academic Advisory Committee, "dealing with programs, and charged with the review of mission statements, of enrolment levels, the monitoring of program evaluation and recommendations on program approvals, and advising on support and appropriate locations for specialized centres and institutes;"⁴²⁶ and
- a mandate for forging appropriate links with business and industry, with secondary education institutions, with community colleges, and with governmental ministries such as those responsible for health and personnel planning.

The Commission urged that in strengthening system planning and enhancing system differentiation, the intermediary body should intervene in institutional plans only to reconcile conflicting aspirations or where there is a failure to satisfy a clear provincial interest. It was envisaged that coordination would be as much as possible undertaken at the institutional rather than program level. The Commission stated:

...we reject the notion that universities should be formally designated by a central body as to their type, or placed in rigid categories. Emphasis should

425. In effect, advising the Minister on all matters of general policy involving one or more universities, or the system as a whole.

426. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

rather be placed upon a competitive system within which institutions are rewarded for the distinctive functions they perform and the quality of their activities and in addition are provided with the capacity to be flexible and innovative.⁴²⁷

In the end, the Bovey Commission did not produce the blueprint for a differentiated system that the government had anticipated and it did not formally categorize or designate institutions as to their role. Responsibility for furthering institutional differentiation was assigned to the proposed intermediary body's review of institutional role statements and administration of various financial incentives. In some quarters the report was considered to be a lobbying instrument for the institutions, and to have placed too much emphasis on the issue of underfunding, recommending "all carrots and no sticks".⁴²⁸

The Council of Ontario Universities praised the Bovey Commission's report, endorsing the majority of the Commission's recommendations and encouraging the government to modify its policies accordingly. Upon release of the report, COU wrote to the Premier, Frank S. Miller:

After several years of drift and a number of studies on the state of the system, during which the capacity of the universities to fulfil their mandate to the people of Ontario has been seriously jeopardized, it is urgent that the Government seize the opportunity provided by this Report to make a fundamental reassessment of its policies for the university sector.⁴²⁹

COU seized particularly upon the Commission's call for assigning higher priority to maintenance of program quality and to research, and the subsequent need for government to review its accessibility and funding policies to ensure that if anything, some level of

427. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

428. Ontario Council on University Affairs, Meeting Notes, May 22, 1985, p. 1.

429. Alvin A. Lee, Chairman, Council of Ontario Universities, to the Honourable Frank S. Miller, Premier of Ontario, February 20, 1985, p. 1.

accessibility should be sacrificed to maintain quality, rather than the reverse if there were to be no increase in financial support. The universities also supported the recommendation to reconstitute and strengthen the capacity of the intermediary body in order to provide for overall system planning and coordination:

This recommendation...is strongly endorsed by the universities, with the understanding that this advisory body should be a simple but effective organization with a small staff focusing on broad system planning issues, not regulation or institutional management.⁴³⁰

There was support for the thrust of the report among university presidents. However, faculty and student associations condemned the proposed trade-off of access for quality and research.⁴³¹ The public media also endorsed the government's longstanding emphasis on ensuring accessibility. Editorial boards gave the report mixed reviews with some, like the *Toronto Star*, adamantly opposing the report's recommendations to decrease access and increase tuition fees, claiming: "reducing access to higher education is not only socially cruel, it is economically short-sighted."⁴³² When asked for a reaction to the report, former Premier William G. Davis was not about to endorse a scheme to limit accessibility either, replying: "if my successor asks me for my advice...I would be reluctant to seize upon limiting enrolment as a solution to this problem."⁴³³ That the political commitment to accessibility remained high is evidenced clearly in a letter written by the Minister of Colleges and Universities to executive heads of Ontario universities the previous May concerning a proposed new funding

430. Alvin A. Lee, Chairman, Council of Ontario Universities, to the Honourable Frank S. Miller, Premier of Ontario, February 20, 1985, Attachment, Council of Ontario Universities, "Response to the Report of the Bovey Commission Ontario Universities: Options and Futures", p. 8.

431. *OCUFA Forum*, "Premises of report were correct but its conclusion was not." (Editorial), Vol. 4., No. 17., February 1985, p. 2 and "Bovey reaction: politicians, students not thrilled, administrators willing to trade access for quality", Vol. 4, No. 17, p. 5, February 1985.

432. Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations, *Forum*, "Special Edition: The Bovey Commission report on Ontario universities", February 1985, p. 2.

433. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

mechanism in which she stated:

...I re-stated the Province's position on accessibility and the need to preserve accountability. Both of these policies remain fundamental to the Province's position on funding distribution.

The Government of Ontario continues to be concerned about the availability of university places for those who have the ability and aspiration to complete a university education. At a time when the demand for university education is uncertain, the government would find it difficult to commit itself on a long term basis, to an allocative mechanism that removes entirely the incentive for universities to accommodate demand. Beyond this, it would be difficult for government to accept an allocative mechanism that permits reductions in enrolment without that reduction being reflected, within a reasonable time, in the operating grants to the universities.⁴³⁴

Whatever commitment existed to follow-up on coordination and planning issues was complicated by a Cabinet shuffle shortly after the report's release which saw the Minister of Education, Bette M. Stephenson become Chair of Management Board, with Keith S. Norton named as her replacement in Education. Premier William G. Davis had retired from politics in November 1984, one month prior to the submission of the Bovey Commission's advice. Frank Miller assumed the leadership of the party, which after a general election in May 1985, formed a minority government in the Legislature. As a trusted colleague and senior Minister in the Miller government, Bette Stephenson was moved to Management Board just as she was set to implement the Bovey Commission recommendations. As Stephenson recalls, she initially resisted the move to Management Board until she was assured that the Bovey recommendations would be followed through by her successor:

[The Premier] and I had some very tough discussions....I did not want to leave Education at that point. I wanted to stay because I felt that there were things I had to get done. He was insistent that...[I]...chair the Management Board and I couldn't do that as Minister of Education. ...I tried to persuade my successor, Keith Norton that this [implementation of the Bovey recommendations] was

434. Letter from the Honourable Bette Stephenson, Minister of Colleges and Universities to Executive Heads of Ontario Universities, May 27, 1983, p. 2.

something that should happen, and Keith was quite sympathetic about it, but then...he was there two...or three months...and after the election, he was moved. Larry Grossman was moved in in May. ...What he...insisted on doing...was the negotiations with the opposition parties because they wanted to force us out of office...so there was no momentum at all.⁴³⁵

The negotiations with the opposition parties were ultimately unsuccessful, and by way of a non-confidence vote on June 18, 1985, the government was defeated, bringing to an end 42 years of continuous Conservative rule. Until the next general election in September 1987, the Liberal party governed with the support of the New Democratic party under terms set out in an "accord" between the two.

Had she stayed in the Ministry of Education and of Colleges and Universities, Bette Stephenson might have introduced a much greater degree of system coordination and planning to university development in Ontario:

From the time the report was delivered into my hands, ...I thought it was the right way to go...I would have tried diligently to persuade Cabinet, and I think I could have done it, to implement the Bovey Report as wholeheartedly as possible. It would have meant developing a structure and it would have to be OCUA plus something... A structure to define the institutions in a way which would allow you to establish, or to implement a funding mechanism based on their definitions...and their functions.... That definition had to be done for each one of them it seemed to me. ...I don't think there was anybody that would have willingly joined that ...but nonetheless, I think that OCUA would have probably done it. I think there were enough people who were really unhappy about what was happening and anxious to get on with something better who would have participated in that. ...It's unfortunate that Bovey just sank into the mire of political inactivity...⁴³⁶

The Liberal government chose to focus its attention on the issue of accessibility and introduced additional targeted funding envelopes. The Liberals felt no obligation to accept the recommendations of a commission that had been established by a previous government. In

435. Interview with Bette Stephenson, April 11, 1997.

436. *Ibid.*

addition, a strengthening of the provincial economy took a degree of pressure off the need for institutional restructuring. Even so, aspects of new funding approaches recommended by OCUA and approved by the Liberal Minister of Colleges and Universities, Gregory Sorbara, could be traced back to Bovey Commission recommendations, including the use of funding corridors and targeted funding envelopes totalling \$50 million for university excellence directed toward faculty renewal, research leadership, library enhancement and instructional equipment.⁴³⁷ Overall, however, and despite almost 20 years of reexamination and reconsideration, the policy environment for universities and the relationship between the universities and government continued to be characterized largely by the policies and practices established during the Robarts era. The government's influence over universities continued to be rooted in the exercise of its spending powers.

3.7.3 The University of Northeastern Ontario 1974-1984

In 1974, the Ontario Council on University Affairs recommended that the Ontario government recognize, as a matter of public policy, the additional costs attending to the provision of university education in Northern Ontario through specifically ear-marked grants to Lakehead and Laurentian Universities and Laurentian's affiliates Algoma, Hearst and Nipissing Colleges. OCUA also undertook to commission a study of post-secondary education in Northern Ontario more broadly construed. This ultimately took the form, in 1975, of a commissioned research project, jointly sponsored by OCUA, the Ontario Economic Council and the Ontario Council of Regents of the Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology.

437. Notes for the Honourable Gregory Sorbara, Minister of Colleges and Universities, The Legislature, October 17, 1985, p. 2.

The research, undertaken by Dalhousie University political scientist, David M. Cameron, cast the public policy dilemma posed by the northern component of the province's post-secondary sector as one of conflicting objectives: "to pursue efficiency in the allocation of public resources and accept inferior postsecondary education within the north, or to pursue geographical equity in the distribution of postsecondary education and accept the higher costs incurred in the north".⁴³⁸ While the study was ongoing, internal conflict and dwindling enrolment at Algoma College prompted the government to establish a one-man royal commission undertaken by John W. Whiteside, Q.C. The government accepted Whiteside's recommendation that Algoma be placed under public trusteeship for an interim period, until such time as a second commission could advise on an appropriate relationship between the College and Laurentian University or merge the university college with Sault College of Applied Arts and Technology. Cameron called for integration of community colleges and university institutions in Northeastern Ontario and recommended a new mechanism to address the unique policy and funding issues facing postsecondary education in the North. Cameron recommended a new advisory council with coordinating responsibilities, designated the Ontario Council on Northern Postsecondary Education. While drawing membership from the North, it was to also include overlapping membership with the Council of Regents, the Ontario Council on University Affairs and the Ontario Economic Council.

Cameron's recommendations were diametrically opposed to the recommendations made by the Wright Commission in 1972 to the effect that "Nipissing College should sever its affiliation with Laurentian University of Sudbury and be established as an independent,

438. David M. Cameron, *The Northern Dilemma: Public Policy and Post-Secondary Education in Northern Ontario*, Toronto: Ontario Economic Council, 1977, pp. 8-9.

undergraduate University College”⁴³⁹ and that “Algoma College should be separated from Laurentian University of Sudbury and be incorporated and chartered as an independent, undergraduate, degree-granting, liberal arts and science college.”⁴⁴⁰ While such recommendations were buried in a separate, ancillary report entitled *Post-Secondary Education in North Bay and Sault Ste. Marie*, and like the Cameron report, received little attention within the Ministry, they had served to bolster those communities’ aspirations for full fledged universities in their midst.

A decade later, OCUA’s advice reflected the degree to which these institutions’ potential for development had not been realized. In 1982, the Ontario Council on University Affairs recommended that government restructure Laurentian University and its affiliates Algoma, Hearst and Nipissing to form a multi-campus university in order to “effectively and efficiently maintain and enhance opportunities for university-level education in this part of Ontario.”⁴⁴¹ OCUA’s decision had been informed by the following observations:

...shortcomings in the existing structural arrangements have become apparent. There is an unsatisfactory distribution of academic programs and faculty resources among the institutions and the off-campus programs offered by the institutions are not effectively co-ordinated. Furthermore, because each of the four institutions is financially independent and since government grants are tied to student enrolment, the institutions often perceive themselves as being in competition for students. The circumstances in which Algoma, Hearst and Nipissing find themselves are especially difficult because academic decisions are made by the Laurentian Senate, while they each must bear full financial responsibility for their own survival. In addition, because of their small size and hence limited range of academic programs, the institutions have not been able to maintain adequate student enrolment, particularly in some non-professional programs.⁴⁴²

439. Commission on Post-Secondary Education in Ontario, *Post-Secondary Education in North Bay and Sault Ste. Marie*, Toronto: Queen’s Printer, 1972, pp. 12-13.

440. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

441. Ontario Council on University Affairs, “Advisory Memorandum 82-VII, A New University for Northeastern Ontario”, *Ninth Annual Report 1982-83*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, March 1983, p. 109.

442. *Ibid.*, p. 110.

OCUA's decision in this regard had been informed by the report of an OCUA appointed Consultant on Northeastern Ontario, A. N. Bourns, who chaired a committee composed of the four executive heads of Northeastern institutions. In October 1981, the Bourns Committee produced a series of recommendations entitled *A Proposal for Structural Change in the University System of Northeastern Ontario*, within which the establishment of a University for Northeastern Ontario was central to the achievement of the government's public policy objectives for university education in the Northeast.⁴⁴³

On October 29, 1982, the Minister of Colleges and Universities, the Honourable Bette Stephenson, wrote to the Ontario Council on University Affairs and the Board Chairs of the four institutions indicating that in response to the recommendation of the Ontario Council on University Affairs:

...the government has decided to accept the principle of a restructuring of the university system in Northeastern Ontario. The acceptance is based on the principle that there be no extra ongoing per student subsidy. The main features of the new institution will be:

- Algoma College, le Collège de Hearst, Laurentian University and Nipissing College will become integral parts of the new university; the existing Act or Letters Patent under which these institutions operate will be repealed; ...
- There will be one board of governors, one senate and one chief executive officer for the new university;...
- The new university will be bilingual and have a special mandate to offer and promote courses and programs in the French and English languages, although not all campuses need necessarily be bilingual;
- The new university through its board and chief executive officer, will allocate its human and physical resources among the various campuses to ensure the most effective utilization of these resources.⁴⁴⁴

443. A.N. Bourns, Chairman, Committee of Executive Heads, *A Proposal For Structural Change in the University System of Northeastern Ontario*, October 19, 1981.

444. Letter from the Honourable Bette Stephenson, Minister of Colleges and Universities to D. G. Howell, Chairman, Board of Trustees, Algoma University College, October 29, 1982, pp. 1-2.

In addition, the Minister indicated that she had decided to establish a committee to recommend “workable governing and administrative structures for the new institution and address other relevant basic issues that will arise in the creation of the new institution”. This committee was subsequently chaired by former Minister of Colleges and Universities, Harry C. Parrott, and included representatives of each of the institutions involved. The *Report of the Committee on University Education in North-Eastern Ontario* (“Parrott Report”), made public on October 19, 1983, advocated a more centralized governing structure than had the Bourns Committee with allocation of resources, and academic planning and standards governed centrally much as OCUA had recommended.⁴⁴⁵ The report, setting out a governance structure for a unified “Champlain University”, was described as “a compromise between the highly centralist views of Laurentian and the equally highly decentralist views of North Bay;” and it was noted that “neither extreme position could be satisfied and... no major changes could be made in the proposed structure without alienating one or more of the participating institutions even more.”⁴⁴⁶ Subsequent negotiations among the four institutions ironed out all areas of disagreement but one - the financial powers of the Board of Governors. Ministerial correspondence indicates that:

Nipissing is adamant that the funding generated by a campus as a result of its enrolment goes to that campus and is not to be distributed by the Board of Governors in accordance with its defined budgeting and fiscal policies. Nipissing further feels that a campus with surplus income should not bale [sic] out one with problems.⁴⁴⁷

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445. Committee on University Education in Northeastern Ontario, *Report of the Committee on University Education in Northeastern Ontario*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, June 29, 1983, pp. 15-35.
446. Letter from Robert G. Ewing, Dean Algoma University College, to the Honourable R.H. Ramsay, Minister of Labour, November 3, 1983.
447. Letter from D.G. Howell, to the Honourable Bette Stephenson, Minister of Colleges and Universities, January 12, 1984.

While the Board Chairs of the four institutions were busily ironing out the details surrounding the academic and financial management of the proposed Champlain University, on April 19, 1984, the Minister of Colleges and Universities requested that the Bovey Commission consider the matter of the reorganization of the university system in Northeastern Ontario "in the context of its overall mandate to present to the government a plan of action to better enable the universities of Ontario to adjust to changing social and economic conditions."⁴⁴⁸ In this regard the Minister wrote to the institutions:

The Government remains committed to a restructuring as proposed by the Ontario Council on University Education in Northeastern Ontario [sic]. I believe, however, that given the broad mandate of the commission, it would be precipitous of the Government to initiate any significant restructuring of Ontario's university system while the Commission's deliberations are in progress. Accordingly, I have asked the Commission to consider the matter of this reorganization in the context of its overall mandate to present to the Government a plan of action to better enable the universities of Ontario to adjust to changing social and economic conditions. It is my intention to announce the government's plans in this regard shortly after the report of the Commission on the Future Development of the Universities of Ontario."⁴⁴⁹

The interruption of momentum for the proposed new structure fuelled local and regional concerns about funding implications and loss of local institutional identity. Changes of leadership at the institutions confounded the process of consensus further and by the time the Bovey Commission began consultation on the issue, all parties expressed reservations about the Parrott Committee proposals. In the result, the Bovey Commission recommended a Northeastern Ontario University Committee, along the lines of the coordinating body recommended by David M. Cameron in his 1977 report, rather than a restructuring of the institutions of Northeastern Ontario. As envisaged by the Bovey Commission, the

448. The Commission on the Future Development of the Universities of Ontario, *op cit.* p. 32.

449. Telegram from the Honourable Bette Stephenson, Minister of Colleges and Universities to R.G. Ewing, Dean, Algoma College, April 26, 1984.

Northeastern Ontario University Committee would be subordinated to the proposed and strengthened intermediary body (IMB) it had recommended, the rationale being

...Northeastern university concerns cannot be wholly divorced from the operation of the system as a whole, and indeed several of our recommendations make specific reference to IMB responsibilities which would include taking into account the particular needs of Northern Ontario universities.⁴⁵⁰

A parallel committee was recommended for Northwestern Ontario.

After ten years of concerted effort to restructure the university-level institutions in Northeastern Ontario and six reports on the issue since 1972, the potential for more effective use of public resources and enhanced services were negated by the divergent recommendations of the Bovey Commission report, followed by an abrupt change in Ministers, and then in governing parties which ensued shortly after the Bovey Report was released. The inherently regionalized nature of an area-based legislature also worked against the promotion of institutional restructuring during the period leading up to the provincial election.

In retrospect, then Minister Bette Stephenson concluded that referring the issue to the Bovey Commission “was the wrong thing to do as far as finding the effective final solution.”⁴⁵¹ However, in view of her expectation of a system blueprint from the Commission, she notes “it was the right thing to do in terms of looking at the system in its totality.”⁴⁵²

She elaborates:

[In terms of] the blueprint, ...Bovey could have helped to define what this institution was going to be...We thought he was going to accept [the fact that there was to be a University of Northeastern Ontario]. We thought it should be

450. The Commission on the Future Development of the Universities of Ontario, *op cit.* p. 32 and p. 43.

451. Interview with Bette Stephenson, April 11, 1997.

452. *Ibid.*

accepted. In the event, he didn't pay any attention to it...they did not do anything effectively about it and there wasn't anything in the final report that I found satisfactory as far as solving the Northeastern Ontario issue was concerned.⁴⁵³

With a new Liberal government came a different approach to the issue of university development, as noted earlier, one facilitated by an influx of additional funding courtesy of a buoyant provincial economy. The government encountered much less resistance to its objectives from the university community by influencing university decision-making through additional funding made available for specific "targeted" activities.

3.8 OCUA - Introduction of the Corridor System of University Financing 1986, 1989, 1990

"This government does not accept the allocative mechanism proposed by the [Bovey] Commission. ..."⁴⁵⁴ stated the new Liberal Minister of Colleges and Universities, Gregory Sorbara, in 1985, as he requested that OCUA review the arrangements for distributing formula funding to the Ontario universities for 1987-88 and beyond. In its 1985 funding advice OCUA had expressed concern

that as a result of the continuing underfunding of recent years the universities of Ontario have inadequate resources to meet the growing challenges and demands facing them...Government must make some fundamental decisions with respect to the funding of the universities of Ontario. If Government's endorsement of the goals for the Ontario university system is to have meaning, then appropriate funds must be made available. Council is convinced that restrictions on Government funding since 1977-78 have resulted in a growing disparity between the level of service demanded of Ontario universities and the level of resources available to provide that service. Council foresees continued growth in the challenges facing Ontario universities and the demands placed on them.⁴⁵⁵

453. *Ibid.*

454. Letter from the Honourable Gregory Sorbara, Minister of Colleges and Universities, to Marnie Paikin, Chair, Ontario Council on University Affairs, October 25, 1985, p. 2.

455. Ontario Council on University Affairs, "Advisory Memorandum 85-IV, Government Support of the University System in 1986-87", *Twelfth Annual Report 1985-86*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, March, 1986, p. 48.

Of particular concern to OCUA was the expectation of a "double cohort" of high school graduates during the years 1988 to 1992, resulting from changes to the secondary school curriculum that reduced the expected time to secondary school completion from five years to four.⁴⁵⁶ This move was expected to increase significantly the short-term demand for university access, with university enrolments peaking in 1990-91 and then declining.

In December 1986, OCUA recommended the establishment of enrolment insensitive funding "corridors" to buffer institutional incomes from short-term enrolment fluctuations. The OCUA "corridor" approach was intended to:

- protect an institution's funding from the impact of the actions of other institutions;
- reduce the incentive for institutions to use growth only for the purpose of increasing their share of total operating grants;
- provide the opportunity for quality and quantity considerations in academic decisions;
- reduce short-term variations in funding which may result from fluctuating enrolment patterns in future years and facilitate medium and long-term planning.⁴⁵⁷

The "planning" aspect of the corridor funding system stemmed from the negotiated changes to an institution's base funding levels (Base BIUs, corridor level, Base BOI and Base Grants). This negotiation process could either be triggered by a planned increase or decrease in enrolment levels. In either case, a specific institutional plan would be required and would be reviewed by OCUA. If OCUA considered the proposed changes to be appropriate, a new level of Base factors and corridor, stemming from an agreed plan, would be recommended to the Minister for approval. OCUA would have responsibility to ensure that changes occurred in a coordinated manner reflecting system-level needs.

456. Years four and five of secondary school i.e. Grades 12 and 13, were replaced by a system of Ontario Academic Credits (OAC's) which students could complete in one year rather than two.

457. Ontario Council on University Affairs, "Advisory Memorandum 86- VII, Modification of the Operating Grants Formula," *Thirteenth Annual Report 1986-87*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, 1987, p. 157.

The corridor approach, and the existing associated funding “envelopes,” consisting of the existing mission-related institution-specific grants (e.g. institutional weights, bilingualism, Northern mission, differentiation), and the new program adjustments envelope, enrolment/accessibility adjustments envelope and research overheads/infrastructure envelope were accepted.⁴⁵⁸ In March 1987, OCUA identified system coordination and planning as one of its “major topics” to be addressed during its annual spring hearings with the university community. OCUA clearly envisioned for itself a greater role in system coordination and planning as a result of the new operating grants formula and its associated program adjustments fund, stating:

In the process of developing the new operating grants formula, Council was convinced of the need to take a more active role in coordinating long-term planning initiatives of Ontario universities. Several institutions identified the need for increased coordination and system-planning as a top priority for Council. The new formula is predicated on Council’s intention to become more active in coordinating province-wide initiatives. However, Council realizes that an appropriate balance must be struck between institutional autonomy and self-determination, on the one hand, and Council’s concerns for system-level coordination and long-term planning on the other.⁴⁵⁹

While the institutions were happy to support OCUA in its efforts to obtain additional funds for the system, their reaction to the proposition that it should become more involved in system planning was divided. The University of Toronto brief indicated that: “The University of Toronto was one of the universities that urged the Council to assume a more active role in coordinating and planning the province’s system of higher education...The Council should have a stronger advisory role...by assuming limited executive powers.”⁴⁶⁰ Such powers were

458. *Ibid.*, pp. 151-188.

459. Letter from Marnie Paikin, Chair, Ontario Council on University Affairs, to Executive Heads of Ontario Universities, March 10, 1987, p. 1.

460. University of Toronto, “Background Notes for the University of Toronto’s Hearing before the Ontario Council on University Affairs, May 22, 1987.

suggested to enable OCUA to review institutional plans in light of the goals, objectives, and probable levels of funding for the university system, to propose amendments as a condition of these plan's acceptance, and to recommend financial incentives to change proposed roles or capacities or both.

At the other extreme was York University, which responded: Unfortunately, as now constituted, OCUA is hardly in a position "to take a more active role in coordinating long-term planning initiatives of Ontario universities."⁴⁶¹ York argued that among other things, OCUA lacked sufficient staff and analytical capacity to deal with long-term trends or conduct sustained technical analysis, was unwilling or unable to think holistically about the future and seemed instead "committed to the articulation or rearticulation of discrete policies dominated by past assumptions." It could therefore never achieve "full policy coordination" within the present arrangements given that OCUA's responsibilities were more limited than those of the Ministry resulting in policy disjunctures such as existed between operating and capital funding policies. York went on to propose that the Council adopt a role more akin to that of the Economic Council of Canada - "a vehicle for the exploration of alternative futures."

In spite of these polarized positions, the institutions were able to agree that OCUA was currently ill-equipped, in terms of mandate and in terms of staff, to undertake any comprehensive system planning role. They also concurred that before system planning could be undertaken, government needed to define and prioritize its policy objectives clearly over the long term and universities required better institutional planning.

461. York University, *Brief to the Ontario Council on University Affairs*, May 1987, p. 2.

OCUA went back to the universities with questions for the 1988 spring hearings that focused on institutional roles and goal statements. OCUA noted:

Little has been done to reconcile these broad goals [of the Ontario university system in 1978] with the activities and goals of individual institutions. Council believes it is essential to remedy that deficiency by asking each institution to identify its role within the Ontario university system and to reconcile its goals with that of the system.⁴⁶²

Attached to the hearing letter was a "Taxonomy of Role Characteristics" which had been developed by OCUA, that institutions were asked to complete by characterizing their institutions and prioritizing their predominant characteristics and roles on a fixed scale for graduate studies, undergraduate professional and non-professional instruction, research, students and the like. Finally, the Council requested that:

Within the context of identifying your institutional goals for the next decade, please identify the role your institution will be able to play in meeting the increased enrolment demand forecasted by COU and the discipline areas in which you will be most able to increase enrolment.⁴⁶³

Universities were blatantly unhappy with OCUA's selection of hearing topics and the hearing with the Council of Ontario Universities was particularly heated as a result. COU demanded to know "why OCUA was asking the questions it is", noting that there is "impatience with fine-tuned differentiation - it is unnecessary and unfortunate."⁴⁶⁴ Universities were unhappy with the tick-sheet, and were not clear what would flow out of self-identification. COU argued that OCUA had failed to provide it with feedback on the conclusions it had drawn from the previous year's hearings and had failed to forge a consensus

462. Letter from Marnie Paikin, Chair, Ontario Council on University Affairs, to Executive Heads of Ontario Universities, COU, COUSA, OCUFA, OFS and COPUS, February 15, 1988, p. 2.

463. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

464. Notes prepared by the author from the April 8, 1988, hearing between OCUA and the Council of Ontario Universities, p. 1.

with the system about what the next steps should be. COU argued that universities were “unprepared to provide a five to seven year academic plan in the context of a role statement because there was no agreement on the nature of a system-wide planning process” and that “ambivalence exists because excessive intervention in smaller decisions is unjustifiably intrusive on responsible, autonomous institutions”.⁴⁶⁵ COU concluded the discussion of institutional roles on this note of frustration:

The problem here is that OCUA failed to provide an appropriate agenda for this meeting. Each side failed to articulate their intentions regarding this meeting. OCUA has never explained what conclusions were drawn from last year’s hearings. Universities don’t want to discuss planning in the context of an open agenda.⁴⁶⁶

Significant and unanticipated enrolment increases, combined with an additional \$84 million accessibility fund announced by government in 1987-88 to fund enrolment growth on an average cost basis for increases in enrolment between 1986-87 and 1987-88, provided additional revenue for institutions beyond their corridor entitlements. This special funding program effectively over-rode the intended enrolment insensitivity of the corridor system and resulted in a formula that was highly sensitive to enrolment.⁴⁶⁷ The accommodation of additional students and the generation of revenue associated with them tended to dominate institutional behaviour. OCUA’s concerns for system planning would, however, be given Ministerial sanction in 1989 when it demonstrated that it could effectively contribute to system planning and coordination.

465. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

466. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

467. For additional information about the Accessibility Envelope, see Ontario Council on University Affairs, “Advisory Memorandum 87-III, The Ongoing Accessibility Envelope for 1987-88”, *Fourteenth Annual Report, 1987-88*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, 1988.

In 1989, the corridor approach was modified to accommodate planned permanent enrolment increases and to permit further enrolment adjustment through a system of negotiated institutional corridor shifts.⁴⁶⁸ The mechanism enabled institutions to make strategic changes to enrolment levels in specific programs deemed by the government to be of overriding public importance from an academic or societal point of view. The revised corridor approach to funding universities was more sensitive to both societal needs and government policy than was its predecessor mechanism.

Under the general approach to corridor changes or “shifts,” institutions had to carefully plan their intended new corridor levels on a sectoral or program basis. Institutions had the opportunity to declare a desired level of corridor increase in each case. All institutions reviewed the other institutions' plans, after which they could modify their proposed new corridor levels downward. Where institutional proposals were in conflict, OCUA required the institutions to attempt to resolve problems of over or under capacity amongst themselves through a process of negotiation. OCUA would intervene as an arbiter only if:

- inter-institutional consensus could not be reached
- institutional plans were inconsistent with system objectives and needs, or
- the sum of individual institutional corridor changes could not be funded at a rate of average Base Operating Income (BOI) per Base BIU (Basic Income Unit) with available funds.

This essentially financial approach enabled system-level priorities for corridor negotiations to be established. OCUA, while not a central planner, acted as a coordinator of change, ensuring a compatible outcome of individual institutional choices from university

468. Ontario Council on University Affairs, "Advisory Memorandum 89-II, Modification of the Operating Grants Formula," *Sixteenth Annual Report 1989-90*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, 1990, p. 89.

system and public policy perspectives. The coordinating role adopted by OCUA was in direct response to government's stated position that the new approach to funding allocation must promote a coordinated and planned approach to future enrolment growth. As a result, the new corridors were not formulaically determined. Over an eight month period in 1989-90, OCUA negotiated new corridor funding levels with the Ontario university system in accordance with specific government priorities.⁴⁶⁹

During these negotiations, OCUA played a pivotal role in balancing institutional development concerns against the need for system coordination with respect to enrolment planning. OCUA managed a process of exchanging information among universities and undertook system-level negotiations with the Executive heads of each institution. While the overall objective of the process was to accommodate permanent enrolment increases system-wide, government had identified priority areas for growth in disciplines and areas where future graduates were required such as science and engineering, teacher education, health-related professions, French language offerings and graduate programs (to replace the professoriate).⁴⁷⁰ Institutions developed program enrolment plans against the enrolment targets for total enrolment and for each priority area that had been developed by OCUA. In round one of the negotiation process, institutions applied for almost twice as many Basic Income Units (BIUs) as were available for allocation. Institutional plans were circulated sector-wide. Institutions were asked to comment on each other's plans with a view to identifying potential conflicts or inconsistencies. The Council then offered informal advice to the system as a whole

469. See Ontario Council on University Affairs, "Advisory Memorandum 90-I, Revisions to Universities' Formula Grants Envelope Corridor Mid-Points as a Result of the 1989-90 Corridor Negotiations." *Seventeenth Annual Report 1990-91*.

470. *Ibid.*, pp. 30-31.

and corresponded with each institution with respect to its particular plan. “Over-bidding” persisted to the final round of negotiations requiring OCUA to be more interventionist, and putting it in the position of choosing among competing institutional plans in order to keep institutional aspirations for growth within the resources available for allocation. In the final round of negotiations OCUA proceeded to adjudicate competing plans to ensure a match between system and provincial needs and institutional plans. The decision criteria it used to make these decisions were three-fold:

1. Implementation of System Objectives:

This included considerations of relevance to system objectives of general accessibility, specific program enrolments related to societal needs and replacement of the professoriate, and the interinstitutional impact of each plan.

2. Suitability of Institutional Plans:

This included considerations of institutional appropriateness, quality of the planning process, conflicts with other institutional plans, and additional capital or extra-ordinary funding requirements.

3. Ability to Reach Targets:

This included considerations of the institutions’ ability to reach general and program specific enrolment targets and the likelihood of new programs meeting the program funding criteria.⁴⁷¹

So critical was OCUA’s role to the successful division of the additional funds that one university president described “Viv’s [Viv Nelles, then Chair of OCUA] meeting with the Presidents where we cut the final deal on the trade-offs of the corridor system [as] the high point of OCUA”⁴⁷²

471. For a more detailed description of the evaluative criteria see Ontario Council on University Affairs, “Advisory Memorandum 90-1, Revisions to Universities’ formula Grants Envelope Corridor Mid-Points as a Result of the 1989-90 Corridor Negotiations”, *Seventeenth Annual Report 1990-91*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, pp. 37, Table 5.

472. Interview with Bob Rosehart, April 8, 1997.

This was the only instance in which a negotiated coordination and planning process was linked to funding levels and where the Minister had delegated to OCUA the authority to act as an official gatekeeper controlling access to the available new funds. As it turned out, this was a unique set of circumstances and system-level enrolment planning, while successfully undertaken by OCUA, did not become an ongoing feature of the allocation of funds to the Ontario university system.

While the government had never sanctioned the enhanced role in system coordination and planning for OCUA that had been proposed by the Bovey Commission, events had forced OCUA into a similar role, which it successfully played, without the formal authority that had been thought necessary.

3.8.1 *The Report of the External Advisor to the Minister of Colleges and Universities on the Future Role and Function of the Ontario Council on University Affairs and its Academic Advisory Committee, 1988 (Stubbs Report)*

The Management Board of Cabinet of the government of Ontario requires government agencies, boards and commissions to undergo a "sunset review" every five years to determine whether these agencies should continue and, if so, whether any of the agencies' functions should be changed. In 1988, the government's advisory body, the Ontario Council on University Affairs, was subject to a periodic sunset review. John O. Stubbs, then President of Trent University, was selected as external advisor to the Minister on the future role and function of OCUA and its Academic Advisory Committee.

Stubbs noted that the role of OCUA since its inception had evolved toward regulatory responsibilities, noting that "[l]imited staff resources, together with the pressures of time and

the growing complexity of issues referred to or taken on by Council, have coalesced to restrain severely the "proactive" potential and initiative of OCUA for a number of years."⁴⁷³

Stubbs concurred with the Bovey Commission's approach to system coordination and planning:

In calling for system planning and coordination which recognizes the existing diversity of the university system and allows it to flourish by funding incentives and disincentives (rather than by dictated differentiation), the fundamental principles of institutional autonomy and public accountability are reaffirmed.⁴⁷⁴

However, Stubbs noted that the new corridor approach to formula funding implemented in 1987 and the increased use of envelope/targeted funding adapted from the financial recommendations of the Bovey Commission were not completely consistent with the role of OCUA because the Bovey Commission's advice concerning a strengthened intermediary body had not been implemented. Stubbs explained:

Put simply, a pre-Bovey OCUA has been called upon (or has sought) to play an advisory and regulatory role in the intricacies of a funding system which, as envisaged by the Bovey Commission, had presupposed a strengthened and clarified mandate for the intermediary body. In the view of a number of universities OCUA currently has neither the mandate nor the resources to play such a role in a timely and effective manner.⁴⁷⁵

Stubbs concluded that OCUA should play "a larger, more formal but still advisory, role in system planning and coordination" achieved primarily through financial incentives and disincentives and not by imposed differentiation. Consistent with the approach advocated by the Bovey Commission, he recommended:

473. John O. Stubbs, *The Report of the External Advisor to the Minister of Colleges and Universities on the Future Role and Function of the Ontario Council on University Affairs and Its Academic Advisory Committee*, July 1988, p. 3.

474. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

475. *Ibid.*

...the process should begin...with individual universities making explicit their role and mission in both teaching and research. Academic planning must clearly remain the responsibility of the individual university but it is understood...that a strengthened OCUA would have ultimately an obligation to ensure that provincial interests and concerns are being met...Offering advice about how the universities, for example, are to cope with the projected substantial growth in enrolment over the next few years makes it imperative that Council have the time and the resources to devote to such a crucial system-wide issue.⁴⁷⁶ ...Council should be encouraged to abandon some of its regulatory functions in order to take a more active role in system planning and coordination.⁴⁷⁷

Stubbs' rationale for recommending that OCUA undertake these responsibilities as an advisory body, and not be given executive authority, was as follows:

...I am reaffirming a basic principle that ultimate political responsibility for the university sector rests with the Minister and the Government. Such a principle also clearly respects university autonomy. This has been the practice for many years and it has produced the strongest and most heterogeneous university system in Canada.⁴⁷⁸

The subsequent Sunset Review of OCUA undertaken by government in 1994, reflecting on the Stubbs' recommendation that OCUA adopt a more pro-active role in the planning and coordination of the university sector, observed that in the interim, 1988-1994:

Essentially, it was left to OCUA itself to determine how to become more pro-active in planning and coordination. The Ministry is satisfied that the council has adopted a more central role in a variety of areas, including: co-ordinating the complex negotiations leading to new enrolment corridors for the universities; developing advice on the establishment of new program quality reviews; co-chairing the University Restructuring Steering Committee; and leading the current resource allocation review requested by the Minister in November 1993.⁴⁷⁹

So ended a period of intense searching for alternative means and structures to enhance

476. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

477. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

478. *Ibid.*

479. Ministry of Education and Training, *Sunset Review of the Ontario Council on University Affairs*, September 1994, p. 3.

system coordination and planning of Ontario universities. OCUA had demonstrated that greater coordination and planning could be introduced into decisions about the growth and development of individual universities from a system perspective without formal executive authority. While the delicate balance among government intervention and university autonomy seemed to have been momentarily struck between government, its intermediary, the university collectivity and the individual institutions, a subsequent change in the economic fortunes of the province, simultaneous with a change in governments and government priorities would change the nature of university-government relations once again.

The next chapter illustrates how, during the 1990s, the emphasis on greater coordination and planning shifted to the entire postsecondary sector and how government, in an attempt to achieve greater consistency between institutional decisions and provincial objectives, subtly shifted its emphasis from formal structures and instruments of planning and coordination to enhanced accountability mechanisms.

Chapter 4: Coordination and Planning across the Postsecondary Sector, 1990-1996

4.1 An Emphasis on Postsecondary Credit Transfer

Greater coordination and planning across the postsecondary sector, meaning among and between universities and colleges of applied arts and technology (CAATs), emerged as a major theme of commissions and reports at the provincial and national level throughout the 1990s. Particular emphasis was placed on the issue of credit transfer between the sectors to facilitate life-long learning and to meet a need for advanced training involving both CAAT and university study. In addition, with particular respect to universities, significant attention was given to assuring high levels of access in the context of stable or declining levels of public support and improving accountability. Having failed to respond to calls for the establishment of a single locus of responsibility for university system-wide coordination and planning with an associated mandate, resources and powers to play such a role effectively, Ontario was ill-equipped to respond to the needs and expectations of the 1990s. As recommendations were received from the various *ad hoc* committees and task forces reporting in the 1990s, it became obvious that government was faced with the prospect of a proliferation of new, even more specialized advisory bodies, with quite limited scope and responsibility. If established, these new advisory bodies would likely overlap and conflict with the mandate of the existing advisory bodies, resulting in even greater policy fragmentation than already existed rather than greater postsecondary coordination. One of the first groups to identify greater postsecondary coordination as being in the public interest was the Premier's Council of Ontario, a provincial government "think-tank."

In 1990, the Ontario Premier's Council issued a report on human resources, entitled *People and Skills in the New Global Economy*, which envisioned the Province better meeting

the needs of the new global economy through life-long educational opportunities. The Premier's Council made specific recommendations with respect to ensuring educational continuity and transferability across the education system, including the establishment of a coordinating council for transferability and continuity to deal with system issues such as admission requirements, program standards, degree requirements and transfer of credits.⁴⁸⁰

The Premier's Council's call for greater coordination and linkages between colleges and universities in order to better serve emerging social and economic needs was repeated by another public review released in 1990 - this one focusing on the future role of the Ontario colleges of applied arts and technology.

In 1988, a review of the mandate of Ontario community colleges was begun by the Ontario Council of Regents of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology at the behest of the provincial government. The final report, *Vision 2000: Quality and Opportunity*, envisioned a future wherein "...in partnership with schools and universities, the colleges are part of an educational system which offers students the widest possible educational horizons..."⁴⁸¹ One of the key directions for needed change identified in the report was that of linkages between universities and community colleges.⁴⁸² As envisioned in the *Vision 2000* report, advanced training, defined as education that combines the strong applied focus of college career-oriented programs with a strong foundation of theory and analytical skills normally obtained within university programs, would directly involve universities in formal bilateral agreements with

480. Premier's Council of Ontario, *People and Skills in the New Global Economy*, Ontario: Queen's Printer, 1990, p. 80.

481. Ministry of Colleges and Universities, *Vision 2000: Quality and Opportunity : A Summary*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, 1990, p. 21.

482. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

the colleges regarding credit transfer and joint programming. Degrees would be granted by an

institute without walls...[which would]...facilitate the development and coordination of college-university arrangements for combined studies; offer combined college-university degree programs, with instruction based at and provided by colleges and universities;universities would provide the degrees to graduates of programs conducted under the auspices of the institute.⁴⁸³

It was recommended that if the university sector demonstrated no interest in this option, then government should vest degree-granting authority in the institute itself, enabling it to play a role similar to that of the Council for National Academic Awards in the United Kingdom.⁴⁸⁴

In response to these recommendations, the government struck a task force, to report in 1993, which would carefully examine issues related to advanced training. This task force, chaired by Walter Pitman, past Director of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education and past President of Ryerson Polytechnic University, was composed of representatives of all sectors of the Ontario educational community.⁴⁸⁵ The Task Force on Advanced Training was charged with:

...identifying the needs of the province for advanced training - as seen from the points of view of student, employee, and employer;...recommending ways of more effective transfer between college and university...determining the need for an expansion of current training opportunities and whether or not this would require a new and special type of education not currently available in this province.⁴⁸⁶

The Task Force pointed out the serious shortcomings of Ontario's binary postsecondary

483. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

484. *Ibid.*

485. Other members included: Douglas Auld, Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario and Council of Presidents; Ralph Benson, Ministry of Education and Training; Bosco Cheung, Ontario Federation of Students; Joy Cohnstaedt, Ontario Council on University Affairs; Jocelyn Dance, Ontario Community College Student Parliamentary Association; Alexander Lockhart, Ontario Council of Regents; Barry Millman, Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations; Al Oatridge, Council of Ontario Universities; Jack Pal, Education Affairs Manager, Dow Chemical Canada, Inc.; Laurence Péchère, Advisory Committee on Francophone Affairs; Keith Stodard, Assistant Vice-President, Northern Telecom Can.; and Amy Thornton, Ontario Public Services Employee's Union.

486. Task Force on Advanced Training, *No Dead Ends: Report of the Task Force on Advanced Training to the Minister of Education and Training*, Toronto: Ministry of Education and Training, April 30, 1993, pp. 3-4.

education structure which did not facilitate coordination and cooperation between the college and university sectors. This in turn, severely limited opportunities for advanced training, something that individuals and employers were demanding. To address these shortcomings, the Task Force recommended measures that would place the whole of publicly assisted postsecondary education in a “system” context. These measures included the elimination of barriers to inter-sectoral credit transfer and the establishment of an arm’s length government body to advise on credit transfer policy which would facilitate fair, equitable and consistent transfer arrangements across the post-secondary sector. It also recommended that the current funding arrangements for colleges and universities be adjusted in order to support college-university, university-college transfer agreements and new advanced training programs. From the perspective of university presidents, the incompatibility of the college and university funding instruments has been one of the most challenging obstacles to greater college-university cooperation.⁴⁸⁷

In response to the Pitman report, on April 21, 1994, the Ministry of Education and Training announced its intention to promote additional college-university collaboration in the development and delivery of advanced training programs through a voluntary consortium representing colleges and universities which would act as a promotional/brokering entity between the college and university sectors. Second, the Ministry financed the development and distribution of the first College-University Transfer Guide. Third, le Conseil de l’éducation et de la formation franco-ontariennes was charged with undertaking an analysis of advanced training opportunities in the French language.⁴⁸⁸

487. Interview with Bob Rosehart, April 8, 1997 and with Peter George, April 9, 1997.

488. See Conseil de l’éducation et de la formation franco-ontariennes, *Le projet de la formation avancée en français: Pour un rapprochement entre les collèges, les universités et le monde du travail*, mars 1995.

In addition to the provincial calls for greater coordination of the postsecondary sector in Ontario in the 1990s, national studies were expressing similar concerns. In 1991, Stuart L. Smith, at the behest of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, tabled the *Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Canadian University Education*. The mandate of the Commission was "to examine the ability of university education to adapt rapidly to the needs of a Canada that is and will continue to be increasingly dependent on the essential national resource of well-educated citizens."⁴⁸⁹

Smith concluded that greater co-operation within higher education was required, noting that "credit transfer problems were among the most frequently mentioned of all the issues that confronted the Commission."⁴⁹⁰ He recommended the establishment of a National Council on Credit Transfer under the aegis of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) and the Secretary of State; an investigation by CMEC into provincial barriers to mobility within professions with an eye to their removal; and enhanced credit transfer opportunities from colleges to universities.⁴⁹¹ These issues were immediately placed on the agenda of the Council of Ministers of Education and in 1994 an inter-provincial response was unveiled.

Spurred by Stuart Smith's 1991 recommendations for more proactive national leadership in the postsecondary sector, the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, composed of the nation's provincial education ministers, met in Victoria in September 1993, and announced their "National Agenda" - a commitment to address the issues of quality,

489. Commission of Inquiry on Canadian University Education, *Report*, Stuart L. Smith, Commissioner, Ottawa: AUCC, September 1991, p. 7.

490. *Ibid.*, p. 113.

491. *Ibid.*, pp. 115-116.

accountability, mobility and accessibility from a national perspective that included the removal of barriers to postsecondary education credit transfer.⁴⁹²

In February 1995, CMEC issued the document *Pan-Canadian Protocol on the Transferability of University Credits* calling on all degree-granting institutions to implement measures that would, by September 1, 1995, provide for the national transferability of credit for first- and second-year university courses.⁴⁹³

In addition to encouraging Canadian post-secondary institutions to recognize credit transfer for the first two years of undergraduate study, CMEC officials were asked to report in February 1996, on the "feasibility and timing of implementing credit transfer between colleges, and between colleges and universities."⁴⁹⁴ No progress has been made on this particular commitment to date.

While there is no national authority over universities in Canada, CMEC officials indicate that most universities in Canada have ratified and implemented the protocol dealing with the transferability of credits for undergraduate programs in years 1 and 2. With regard to the transferability of credits earned in years three and four, the Ministers of Education remain committed to the transferability of these credits but are without support from the universities in this regard. As a result, instead of proceeding on a pan-Canadian basis at this time, they have opted for ensuring transferability of credits among postsecondary institutions within each jurisdiction.⁴⁹⁵

492. Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, *Press Release*, Charlottetown, September 27, 1994, p. 1.

493. Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, *Pan-Canadian Protocol on the Transferability of University Credits*, February 7, 1995, p. 1.

494. Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, *Press Release*, Charlottetown, September 27, 1994, p. 1.

495. Interview with Robert Patry, March 18, 1997.

In Ontario, the Council of Ontario Universities approved the CMEC protocol pertaining to the transferability of year one and two undergraduate credits among universities, albeit with minor amendments making the treatment of students from outside Ontario the same as domestic Ontario students. The new policies have been in force since the 1996-97 academic year and all institutions have complied.⁴⁹⁶ The Ontario universities already had agreed upon a “General Policy” for credit transfer among Ontario universities resulting from the recommendations of a 1992 report undertaken at the Minister’s behest about ways to facilitate undergraduate credit transfer among Ontario universities.⁴⁹⁷

In the next section, government’s efforts to address university development issues through enhanced accountability mechanisms are examined.

4.2 Access and Accountability: University Responsiveness 1990-1997

In September 1990, for the first time in Ontario’s history, the New Democratic Party (NDP) formed the provincial government. Richard Allen, a former professor of history at McMaster University, was appointed Minister of Colleges and Universities and Minister of Skills Development and held that post until January 1993. Allen’s vision of accessibility had a decidedly egalitarian flavour:

I think one has to work at what I like to increasingly call an equality of outcomes for all groups, as distinct from an equality of opportunity. What I’m

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496. Interview with Dale Shipley, May 1, 1997.
The Council of Ontario Universities had already moved to make credit transfer practices among universities more consistent in 1993 as a result of the recommendations of a report undertaken for COU at the request of the Minister of Education and Training by Donald Baker, Vice-President Academic, Wilfrid Laurier University. The November 1992 report was entitled *Transfer of Undergraduate Course Credit Among Ontario Universities: Report and Recommendations*.
497. Donald Baker (Chair), Working Group of the Vice-President’s Academic, Council of Ontario Universities, *Transfer of Undergraduate Course Credit Among Ontario Universities: Report and Recommendations*, November 1992, p. 5.

saying is I don't think we have to focus the accessibility issue around increasing global numbers and therefore increasing global costs. In the first instance, let's get the fairness base in place and then address the global question.⁴⁹⁸

The issue of university responsiveness to the social objectives introduced by the NDP would form an underlying theme of university-government relations for the five-year duration of the NDP's stay in office. At a more specific level, by the early 1990s, government's attention with respect to the university sector was focused on two issues: how universities could more effectively achieve government's accessibility objectives in view of increasing demand for university education, combined with continued restrictions on university funding levels; and how to improve university accountability. Both issues were proving difficult and complex to deal with and would severely strain university-government relations in the province.

The former concern arose from an unforeseen increase in the participation rate of the 18-24 age population from 12 percent in 1979-80 to 19 per cent in 1993-94. The latter concern emerged largely in response to the Provincial Auditor's conclusion, following inspection audits of three universities between 1988 and 1990, that "accountability for the significant amount of funding provided to Ontario's universities remains inadequate..."⁴⁹⁹ and that comprehensive provincial audits of universities were required. In 1991, the Minister of Colleges and Universities announced a two-pronged review of university accountability.

498. "Richard Allen, face to face", *Hamilton Spectator*, October 6, 1990.

499. Task Force on University Accountability, *University Accountability: A Strengthened Framework*, May 1993, p. 14, quoting from a letter from the Provincial Auditor to the Deputy Minister, Colleges and Universities, December 20, 1990, p. 8.

4.2.1 System Planning and Coordination through the Back Door: University Accountability

In 1993, H.V. Nelles, former chair of the Ontario Council on University Affairs suggested that in Ontario, the issue of accountability was simply a repackaging of the assorted issues associated with provincial development and duplication.⁵⁰⁰ Former Minister Bette Stephenson suggested as much in her reflections about the Bovey Commission's efforts to provide a "system blueprint" when she remarked that things would improve "if we can...get the kind of accountability within the Boards of Governors which we should have had. If I had thought of that at the time of the Bovey report, that's what I would have brought in first, but we weren't thinking about it that way."⁵⁰¹ Michael Skolnik describes this as "a 'back door' way of trying to get at questions about system level planning..."⁵⁰² As will be shown in this section, however, the fragmentation of the issue of system development led to recommendations that would have had the government segregate further what little system authority already existed around issues of system development directly or indirectly, as a result of a proliferation of additional, single issue, advisory/oversight bodies.

In September 1991, William (Bill) H. Broadhurst, a member of the Ontario Council on University Affairs (OCUA), and former Chair and Senior Partner, Price Waterhouse, was named chair of the Task Force on University Accountability. The Task Force was composed

500. H.V. Nelles, *University Accountability, Speaker's Remarks at a Session of the Toronto Area Higher Education Seminar Series*, Glendon College, Toronto, October 1993, cited in Michael Skolnik, "University Accountability in Ontario in the Nineties: Is There a Role for a Provincial Agency?", *Ontario Journal of Higher Education 1994*, Toronto: Higher Education Group of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1994, pp. 121 and 125, Footnote No. 5.

501. Interview with Bette Stephenson, April 11, 1997.

502. Michael Skolnik, "University Accountability in Ontario in the Nineties...", *op cit.* p. 121.

of twelve members, broadly representative of the university community.⁵⁰³ It was given a mandate “to develop recommendations for a framework to provide for the clear accountability of Ontario’s universities to the public”.⁵⁰⁴ At the same time, the Minister requested that OCUA provide advice on “whether and how to establish a system of program review as a means of ensuring public accountability for academic quality in provincially-assisted universities”.⁵⁰⁵

In the absence of any public policy objectives relating funding levels to clearly articulated objectives for university performance, university accountability had been bedeviled by institutional claims of underfunding and an unclear prioritization of government priorities with respect to accessibility, economy and quality. To complicate matters further, the Ministry had maintained over the years that the universities were accountable through their boards directly to the Provincial Legislature. As a senior ministry official explains:

Very early in [the 1980s], the Provincial Auditor...started coming to us and saying: “How are you making the universities accountable for all the taxpayers dollars they are spending?” I can...remember letters for the Deputy Minister’s signature saying...[universities are] autonomous. Their boards are responsible to the Legislature, ...the Legislature is creating the university and creating a board and giving it all the powers, and that’s where the focus should be.⁵⁰⁶

That this view persisted in the Ministry to the 1990s was substantiated by the Auditor’s observations in 1990 to the effect that “to whom...governing bodies are accountable is an issue that remains in limbo”⁵⁰⁷ in part because the Ministry “maintains that it lacks the legislative

503. The Task Force was composed of individuals nominated by the Council of Ontario Universities, the Council of Chairmen of Ontario Universities, Ontario Council on University Affairs, Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations, Confederation of Ontario University Staff Associations, Ontario Federation of Students, Ontario Graduate Association, and the Ministry of Colleges and Universities.

504. Task Force on University Accountability, *op cit.*, p. 16.

505. Ontario Council on University Affairs, *Twentieth Annual Report 1993-94*, “Advisory Memorandum 93-VI, Academic Quality Reviews,” Toronto: December 1994, p. 246.

506. Interview with Senior Ministry Official, April 10, 1997.

507. Task Force on University Accountability, *op cit.*, p. 14, citing from a letter from the Provincial Auditor to the Deputy Minister, Colleges and Universities, December 20, 1980, p. 8.

authority to establish such a relationship...the Ministry believes that the governing bodies are accountable directly to the public."⁵⁰⁸

In May 1993, the Task Force on University Accountability issued its final report, entitled *University Accountability: A Strengthened Framework*. The approach developed by the Task Force involved an institutionally-based accountability framework, the locus of which was the governing body of each institution. Institutional responsibilities, however, were to be balanced by an independent, external monitoring agency, an Accountability Review Committee, to be located within OCUA. The report was released to the public almost immediately. Responses from the university community reflected an overall acceptance of the thrust of the report and the Minister directed the universities to implement those recommendations that fell within their purview. However, some observers decreed the Broadhurst Committee recommendations to have provided convincing evidence of a serious case of "accountabilitis" infecting the government-university relationship. J. Stefan Dupré defined the condition of "accountabilitis" as one where

...universities are to be accountable for more and more about everything on their way to being responsive to nothing. Alternatively they are to be responsive to more and more about everything on their way to being accountable for nothing.⁵⁰⁹

He severely criticised the report for failing to provide a precise definition of what was meant by the term accountability, by providing only a "fuzzy and undefined"⁵¹⁰ range of possibilities

508. *Ibid.* As Skolnik properly observes: "It is not clear just how accountability to the public but not to (or presumably, through) the Ministry could be operationalized in practice." Michael Skolnik, "University Accountability in Ontario in the Nineties...", *op cit.*, p. 113.

509. J. Stefan Dupré, *When Does Accountability Become Accountabilitis?*, An Address to the Queen's University Board of Trustees, November 11, 1994, Mimeograph, pp. 3-4.

510. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

that were dependent “upon the context”.⁵¹¹ He also expressed concern that accountability mechanisms appeared to be multiplying to the point where what was emerging looked “suspiciously like an aborning industry whose denizens inhabit both government and the universities”.⁵¹²

While most of the university community supported the thrust of the report, the monitored self-regulation that was advocated by the Task Force as the appropriate foundation of university accountability in Ontario was criticized by some for its lack of system perspective. As Skolnik argued:

One of the major weaknesses of the TFUA approach is that it is atomistic: it looks at each institution only in isolation, not as a component of a system. To be sure, one of the major determinants of how well the university system “meets the public’s needs” is the individual performance of each institution. However, another major factor is the structure of the whole system; that is, how each institution’s mission, role, and activities mesh with those of other institutions, whether there is duplication of effort and resources, and whether there is coordination of complementary activities among institutions.⁵¹³

What the Task Force on University Accountability had failed to come to terms with was the recurring dilemma of accountability “for what” from a system perspective for which institutions could be held accountable.

While debate in the Ministry simmered over the appropriate degree to which it should become involved in university affairs for accountability purposes, the Minister’s decision concerning an overall approach to an accountability framework awaited the OCUA advice on accountability for program quality. This advice was not long in coming. Just two months later, in July 1993, OCUA submitted its advice, noting that although the Ontario Council on

511. Task Force on University Accountability, *op cit.*, p. 11.

512. J. Stefan Dupré, *When Does Accountability Become Accountabilitis?*, *op cit.*, p. 3.

513. Michael Skolnik, “University Accountability in Ontario in the Nineties...”, *op cit.* p. 120.

Graduate Studies' appraisal process had been providing accountability for graduate program quality since the late 1960s, there was "no province-wide systematic quality review process at the undergraduate level."⁵¹⁴ The Council recommended a "monitored self-regulation" approach to accountability for program quality. This process was intended to ensure that policies and processes for reviewing the quality of undergraduate programs would be developed and conducted by individual institutions and that the processes, as opposed to the results, would be subject to audit by an independent body, a new "Academic Quality Audit Committee", whose members would be publicly appointed. This approach mirrored that of the Task Force on University Accountability in striking what was thought to be a reasonable balance between the institutional autonomy and academic freedom of self-governing institutions, and the manner and degree to which such institutions were required to demonstrate publicly that they were making sound academic and financial choices in the context of available resources and the government's economic, social and cultural policies.

Facing unfavourable university reaction to the potential establishment of yet another oversight agency, and OCUA's recommendation to rationalize the number of advisory bodies established to monitor accountability matters, the Minister delayed his decision with respect to the establishment of additional monitoring agencies until the issue of an appropriate role for the ministry within the overall accountability framework was resolved. The issue was further complicated by the Minister's announcement in February 1995 of an Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) with "responsibility for addressing issues of educational quality and accountability in the elementary/secondary sector and the postsecondary

514. Ontario Council on University Affairs, *Twentieth Annual Report 1993-94*, "Advisory Memorandum 93-VI, Academic Quality Reviews", Toronto: December 1994, p. 246.

sector...”⁵¹⁵ suggesting that the Ministry was contemplating one body with a mandate for accountability encompassing all levels of publicly-supported education.

According to then Deputy Minister, Charles Pascal, the government had anticipated that the EQAO would “become robust enough to be the quality assurance umbrella for postsecondary as well, ...even though...the role of that agency with the universities would be very different. ...it would be a process audit...using peer review.”⁵¹⁶ However, Pascal added, the idea “wasn’t something the university presidents liked at all.”⁵¹⁷

Although postsecondary responsibilities for the EQAO have not yet materialized, the Council of Ontario Universities first proposed, and then established its own undergraduate program review audit committee with responsibility for conducting annual audits of the institutional mechanisms for review of undergraduate program quality. The first cycle of undergraduate program quality reviews began in 1997. The external monitoring body that the Task Force on University Accountability argued was essential to the achievement of a strengthened accountability framework has not been established.

4.3 A Reconsideration of University Funding Policies and Instruments, 1993-1995

While accountability issues worked their way through institutional governing bodies and the Ministry bureaucracy, the government requested yet another review of the funding mechanism for Ontario universities in relation to the government’s public policy objectives.

515. Memorandum from the Honourable Dave Cooke, Minister of Education and Training, to Executive Heads and Chairs of the Governing Boards/Councils of the Provincially-assisted Universities, Ontario College of Art, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, February 17, 1995, Re: Creation of an Education Quality and Accountability Office.

516. Interview with Charles Pascal, April 15, 1997.

517. *Ibid.*

In November 1993, the Minister of Education and Training asked OCUA to provide advice concerning revisions to the funding processes with a view to promoting specific policy objectives. These objectives included increased accessibility, greater emphasis on teaching, enhanced credit transfer among universities and between universities and colleges, program rationalization, and enhanced accountability for the resources allocated to teaching, research and community service. In short, the government was now turning to reform of the funding mechanism as a way to provide greater control over universities' use of public resources and to make it a more effective instrument of system development that would direct the system toward the achievement of the government's objectives.

This Ministerial reference, which became known as the Resource Allocation Review (RAR), reflected the government's growing frustration and dissatisfaction with the results of a series of *ad hoc* initiatives intended to demonstrate institutional responsiveness to the current political agenda with its emphasis on social equity, and the depressed economic environment. In many ways, it was also a typical reaction to the fundamental changes in the province's economy, labour markets, educational and fiscal environment that were being experienced equally by other Canadian provinces and had already been dealt with through postsecondary restructuring initiatives by jurisdictions such as the United Kingdom, Australia and a variety of U.S. states. In the United Kingdom and Australia, much of the restructuring that occurred was enabled by national government legislation.⁵¹⁸ In the United States, state university system

518. For additional information on developments in the United Kingdom, see for example National Audit Office, Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General, *The Financial Health of Higher Education Institutions in England*, London: House of Commons, November 21, 1994, and Henry D.R. Miller, *The Management of Change in Universities: Universities, State and Economy in Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom*, Buckingham: Open University Press, 1995. For additional information on developments in Australia see for example Henry D.R. Miller, *op cit.* and Desmond J. Connelly, "National Government Intervention in Higher Education in Australia", a paper presented at the annual conference of the Canadian Society for the Study of Higher Education, June 1993, Ottawa.

restructuring was achieved through a combination of techniques including greater state coordinating board intervention, changes to state appropriations and institutionally-directed restructuring.⁵¹⁹

Before engaging in further discussion of the Resource Allocation Review, it is instructive to examine briefly the worsening economic situation of the province and the series of *ad hoc* attempts to facilitate restructuring of the Ontario postsecondary sector, both of which influenced the government's decision to undertake a comprehensive review of university funding policies and mechanisms.

4.3.1 Economic Constraint and University Rigidities

Economic factors, particularly the recession of the late 1980s and early 1990s and mounting public deficits and debt, led to a desire for immediate expenditure reductions on the part of the Ontario government in the early 1990s. As the 1990s progressed, the economic recession proved to be one of the twentieth century's worst. Ontario's slow economic recovery, combined with the effects of the Free Trade Agreement, a world depression in commodity prices, a high Canadian dollar, the collapse of fiscal federalism,⁵²⁰ and mounting interest on the provincial debt were taking a severe toll on provincial finances.⁵²¹ Continuing provincial revenue shortfalls placed stringent limitations on public spending and forced wage roll-backs in the public sector, under what was called the *Social Contract*, 1993. The dramatic

519. Diana Royce, "University "Restructuring" in Four Jurisdictions: An Overview," Unpublished research paper for OISE course 1821, "Diversity and Differentiation in Postsecondary Education", December 9, 1992.

520. Cuts in the Established Program Financing and the Canada Assistance Plan reduced Federal transfer payments to Ontario by \$10.5 billion over three years - the equivalent of just under 20 percent of the Province's accumulated deficit in 1992.

521. Statement by Floyd Laughren, Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics on the Ontario Fiscal Outlook and Major Transfer Payments, January 21, 1992.

reductions in public spending perceived necessary could not wait for the outcomes of greater coordination and planning. With few policy levers at its disposal to direct universities, the Ontario government initiated a string of “restructuring” initiatives in an attempt to turn the great ship postsecondary in the direction of greater efficiency, effectiveness, accessibility, and quality, all with less and less public funding.

In January 1992, following the Treasurer’s statement that operating support to universities would increase 1% for 1992-93, followed by 2% increases in 1993-94 and 1994-95,⁵²² the Minister of Colleges and Universities issued a proposal for developing short- and long-term options to reshape the postsecondary sector in Ontario. In a letter to the postsecondary sector, the Minister stated “it is our belief that a reshaping of the postsecondary sector is the most effective way to ensure that programs and services can be delivered more efficiently to the maximum number of students without loss of quality.”⁵²³ The Minister’s proposal stressed the importance of consultation with the postsecondary community. This commitment resulted in the establishment of College and University Long-term Restructuring Steering Committees in the summer of 1992 to address restructuring issues on an ongoing basis as well as a “transition assistance” fund in the order of \$22 million of additional funding to enable universities to restructure “in a period of severe fiscal constraint, which is expected to persist beyond the current year.”⁵²⁴ Universities were required to compete for funds in a process adjudicated by the Ontario Council on University Affairs. The previous lack of

522. Honourable Richard Allen, Minister of Colleges and Universities, to Dr. H.V. Nelles, Chair, OCUA, January 22, 1992.

523. Honourable Richard Allen, Minister of Colleges and Universities, *Memorandum to Executive Heads, Colleges and Universities and Members of the College and University Round Tables*, January 21, 1992.

524. Ontario Council on University Affairs, “Advisory Memorandum 92-VI, University Transition Assistance, 1992”, *Nineteenth Annual Report 1992-93*, p. 197.

system-level incentives for institutional collaboration and cooperation perceived by the Minister was addressed in the stipulations placed upon the criteria for adjudication OCUA was directed to include. Specifically, OCUA was directed to consider the “extent to which the various projects...would complement each other, and facilitate the reshaping of the postsecondary sector in Ontario over the longer term...” as well as to give priority to proposals “with a potential system-wide impact or application, or jointly submitted by two or more institutions...Of particular interest are projects involving both universities and colleges.”⁵²⁵

The University Restructuring Steering Committee, established in July 1992, was composed of stakeholder representatives from across the university community.⁵²⁶ The committee co-chairs were the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Colleges and Universities and the chair of OCUA. The remaining seventeen members were nominated by provincial university organizations, broadly representative of the university community. Staff was provided by OCUA and the Ministry. The mandate of the Steering Committee was to develop recommendations concerning long-term strategies that would assist the university sector to respond to current and future challenges. The challenges identified by the Minister involved making the university sector

525. Honourable Richard Allen, Minister of Colleges and Universities, to Dr. H.V. Nelles, Chair, Ontario Council on University Affairs, April 13, 1992.

526. Co-chairs were Deputy Minister of Colleges and Universities, Dr. Bernard Shapiro, and Chair of OCUA, initially Colin Graham (acting chair) then Joy Cohnstaedt. Ministry of Colleges and Universities representative - Jan Donio, Assistant Deputy Minister, Student Support and Corporate Services. OCUA representatives included Colin Graham, Partner, Ernst & Young and Jill Vickers, Professor, Political Science, Carleton University. Stakeholders included from CUPE, Morna Ballantyne; Comité des affaires francophones, Dyane Adam; COUSA - Barbara Johns, President COUSA; Council of Chairmen of Ontario Universities - Roberto Grosso, Chair, Board of Governors, Laurentian University, and David Pady, Chair, Board of Governors, Wilfrid Laurier University; from COU - Peter George, President COU, Robert Pritchard, President University of Toronto, Marcel Hamelin, Rector University of Ottawa, and Catherine Ross, School of Library and Information Science, University of Western Ontario. From OCUFA - Saul Ross, President, and Mary Frances Richardson, Professor, Brock University. From the Ontario Federation of Students - Jeff Zoeller. From the Ontario Graduate Association - David Heap.

responsive to the continuous or lifelong education, training and knowledge needs of a modern economy and democratic society, and ensuring the fullest possible response to the government's equity/access agenda within an environment of constrained public resources.⁵²⁷

In an unusual move, then Minister of Colleges and Universities, Richard Allen, issued a personal statement on postsecondary education in conjunction with the establishment of the University Restructuring Steering Committee which was intended to inform its work.⁵²⁸ In this one page statement, Allen's vision of postsecondary education and the government's equity objective is explicit:

In the last 20 years, Ontario has moved into an era of mass postsecondary education on a scale virtually unrivalled by other jurisdictions. Approximately one million Ontario adults now access our colleges and universities annually. Enrolment projections, labour market needs and the challenge of living in a global society point to a further 34% increase over this decade. ...[O]ur postsecondary institutions are undergoing transformation into vehicles for an education-saturated society in which, for individuals, learning never ends... The challenge of a new paradigm of open, continuous and successive learning is and will be enormous, and even daunting in terms of institutional change. ...In a new paradigm, equity and access take on new meaning as means and ends, but justice, the good life and economic efficiency alike require that quality remain the goal. A new paradigm of postsecondary education is a goal worth our best efforts. In a context of constraint it forces us to reconsider existing commitments, to reprioritize and reallocate in order to expand what momentum presently exists and to enhance resources available for the task. To do otherwise is to miss the challenge of the hour.⁵²⁹

The Minister specifically requested advice on institutional specialization and program rationalization with potential for cost-savings and enhancing institutional differentiation;

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527. University Restructuring Steering Committee, Ministry of Colleges and Universities, *Open Letter to Members of the Ontario University Community and Other Interested Persons*, October 30, 1992, p. 1.
528. University Restructuring Steering Committee, Ministry of Colleges and Universities, *Open Letter to Members of the Ontario University Community and Other Interested Persons*, September 4, 1992, p. 1.
529. The Honourable Richard Allen, "Minister's Statement on Postsecondary Education", July 1992, attachment to an *Open Letter to Members of the Ontario University Community and Other Interested Persons*, from Colin Graham, Interim Chair, Ontario Council on University Affairs and Co-Chair of the Steering Committee and Bernard J. Shapiro, Deputy Minister of Colleges and Universities and Co-Chair of the Steering Committee, September 4, 1992.

options to strengthen the quality of undergraduate teaching; technological and non-technological alternative delivery mechanisms leading to cost-savings; criteria for eligibility for public funding including use of full-cost recovery activity, private institutions, private sector delivery; as well as restructuring of the academic year to make better use of physical plant, learning resources, and to explore stronger linkages with employers and labour to introduce more work experience into education.⁵³⁰ The Steering Committee was instructed to identify and prioritize for the Minister the issues it intended to address prior to undertaking further work. In compliance with this request, the Steering Committee established a statement of goals for the Ontario university system⁵³¹ and identified six major areas for study, although contrary to the Minister's expectations, the majority of the membership did not accept that there would be strict limits on the availability of public sector funding of the university sector. The goals statement and proposed areas of study were circulated widely, within and outside the university community for comment.

The six areas of inquiry identified by the Steering Committee were: quality of university education; autonomy, diversity and accountability; cooperation; equity of access and retention; innovation and responsiveness; and funding and cost-effectiveness. Within these

530. University Restructuring Steering Committee, Ministry of Colleges and Universities, *Open Letter to Members of the Ontario University Community and Other Interested Persons*, September 10, 1992, attachment "Terms of Reference: University Restructuring Steering Committee", pp. 2-3 .

531. The goals for the university system developed by the URSC were:

- to develop an educated populace with enlightened, dynamic citizens and leaders for a democratic society;
- to educate and train people throughout their lives for professions and occupations;
- to teach and provide for study at the highest intellectual standard, including opportunities at the highest international level;
- to engage in scholarship, creative activity, basic and applied research at the highest intellectual standard, including activities at the highest international level;
- to provide equity of access;
- to be responsive to student needs;
- to achieve greater interaction among universities, other educational institutions and the broader community; and
- to be democratic and collegial institutions with significant capacity for change, adaptation and co-operation, and able to make decisions in an open, transparent and accountable manner.

areas, a number of the research questions identified were clearly related to matters of system planning and coordination fundamental to university-government relations. An interim report, dated December 1992, was submitted to the Minister in early 1993 and included nine areas for restructuring and associated research plans which would be undertaken over the next 18 months.

In the spring of 1993, the government realized that it had seriously underestimated the size of its deficit and additional funding cuts were announced, including the elimination of a \$17 million "Restructuring for Efficiency" fund to assist universities in achieving reductions in the per-unit-cost of delivery - a program that had just been unveiled on December 22, 1992.⁵³² A Cabinet shuffle in January resulted in a new Minister, Dave Cooke, taking up the reins for postsecondary affairs within the context of a "super-Ministry" of Education and Training where elementary/secondary and postsecondary education were integrated. The new Minister did not respond to the interim report of the Restructuring Steering Committee and did not make it publicly available. The University Restructuring Steering Committee was effectively suspended. It was not until May 1993, that government concerns were publicly expressed regarding the proposed agenda and a formal suspension of the Committee occurred.

By letter of May 7, 1993, the Honourable Dave Cooke stated:

While the projects, viewed collectively, would involve a comprehensive rethinking of key aspects of university activity, many of the projects do not directly address restructuring to effect cost reduction. I understand that this type of restructuring was only one aspect the Committee was trying to address in crafting the agenda. Fiscal developments, however, have made it even more critical that restructuring now be focused more explicitly on the goal of cost reduction.

532. Honourable Richard Allen, Minister of Colleges and Universities, to Professor Joy Cohnstaedt, December 22, 1992.

...the Government has recently initiated discussions leading to the development of a social contract. ...In view of the social contract discussions, however, I believe that the work of the University Restructuring Steering Committee should be suspended until such time as we have a clearer sense of the direction and potential outcomes of the social contract discussions. ...⁵³³

Although, the *University Subsector Social Contract* of 1993 stipulated that, with respect to review of procurement and contracting systems, universities will "participate in a process, under the auspices of the University Restructuring Steering Committee" which will review those systems "to the extent that there may be sector-wide issues"....⁵³⁴ the University Restructuring Steering Committee never reconvened. It was the Ministry's view that the research projects the Committee had proposed amounted to a shopping list of "all the things that weren't being done by the system - none of [which] had to do with restructuring...[or] improv[ing] the quality of education at less cost."⁵³⁵ The background work done for the Committee and a number of the restructuring ideas, would however, be recycled in 1994-95 when OCUA undertook the Resource Allocation Review of university funding in a policy environment emphasizing accessibility, accountability and equity.

4.3.2 *The OCUA Resource Allocation Review, 1993-1995*

Accessibility was becoming an increasingly worrisome issue for the Ministry. Enrolment demand projections undertaken in 1992 by a group of McMaster University researchers at the government's behest, indicated that postsecondary-level, year-one

533. Honourable Dave Cooke, Minister of Education and Training, to Dr. Charles E. Pascal, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education and Training and Professor Joy Cohnstaedt, Chair, Ontario Council on University Affairs, May 7, 1993.

534. Ontario, *University Subsector Social Contract*, July 7, 1993, p. 6. The "social contract" involved mandatory unpaid leave throughout the public sector from 1993-1995 to assist the government in coping with a serious fiscal crisis in public finance.

535. Interview with Charles Pascal, April 15, 1997.

enrolments could be expected to increase at an average rate of about 3 percent per year, or by more than one-third over the next decade, with university enrolments increasing more rapidly than that of the college system.⁵³⁶ This would occur despite a decline in the population of 18-20 year olds, due to an anticipated increase of over 7% in the Ontario participation rate, which at 25.4 percent of year 1 postsecondary enrolments aged 18-20, was already one of the highest in the world.⁵³⁷ This projection was followed in 1994 by a second study, suggesting that Canada-wide university enrolment could be expected to grow on average at a rate of 3 percent or 2.8 percent full-time equivalents.⁵³⁸ Rates of economic growth were anticipated to be modest in the near and intermediate future while the demand for university services was expected to grow faster than public resources.

In 1993-94, provincial operating grants to Ontario universities declined for the first time, dropping 6.3 percent. On a per student basis, operating grants adjusted for inflation had fallen almost 23% since 1978-79.⁵³⁹ In addition, the province continued to experience a decline in federal transfers for postsecondary education and health under the provisions of Established Programs Financing (EPF). Yet, universities were becoming ever more central institutions in the emerging knowledge-based economy that was deemed necessary for global competitiveness. It was in this context that on November 24, 1993, the Honourable Dave Cooke, Minister of Education and Training, requested that OCUA undertake "a review of the

536. Frank T. Denton, Peter J. George, Peter C. Pineo, and Byron G. Spencer, "Changing Enrolment Patterns in Ontario Postsecondary Education: A Summary of the Findings", mimeograph, June 1992.

537. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

538. Andrew Berczi, "Canadian Higher Education in the First Decade of the 21st Century - A Speculative Projection of Past Trends and Current Evolutionary Forces", paper presented to the Canadian Society for the Study of Higher Education, Calgary, Alberta, June 15-19, 1994, p. 5.

539. *Ibid.*

funding system for the universities of Ontario.”⁵⁴⁰ However, the Minister’s intentions went well beyond a strict review of the allocative mechanism. He continued:

In the course of this analysis, I would ask Council to examine issues in achieving an appropriate balance among teaching, administration, research and community service and in developing mechanisms for accountability in the use of resources in these areas. The funding system must contain mechanisms and incentives for achieving the necessary combination of efficiency, economy and reallocation to achieve the priorities...identified...⁵⁴¹

These priorities were an increased need for accessibility due to growth in the university age cohort and increasing participation rates; increasing access for non-traditional students; greater emphasis on teaching; need for an integrated educational system “which permits easy movement from one sector to another”; a funding system that “must encourage sharing and cooperation among universities, colleges of applied arts and technology and others”; and incentives to “encourage program cooperation and restructuring” and greater differentiation.⁵⁴² As the then Chair of OCUA, noted, as a result of : “[t]he failure of [URSC] to provide a road-map [for the government] that was doable, ...[the government] struck a reference that perhaps was more directive than it might have been in previous situations.”⁵⁴³ This unusual degree of “directive” was not lost on university administrators who kept asking the Deputy Minister “what’s behind the letter?... Do they want to take over this or that?”⁵⁴⁴

On August 8, 1994, OCUA released a discussion paper entitled *Sustaining Quality in Changing Times: Funding Ontario Universities* which reinforced the universities’ perception

540. The Honourable Dave Cooke, Minister of Education and Training, to Professor Joy Cohnstaedt, Chair, Ontario Council on University Affairs, November 24, 1993.

541. *Ibid.*

542. *Ibid.*

543. Interview with Joy Cohnstaedt, April 17, 1997.

544. Interview with Charles Pascal, April 15, 1997.

that OCUA's thinking had gone from identifying policy instruments to deal with universities, to dealing with universities as instruments of public policy. The spectre of increased centralized coordination and planning of universities was raised early in the discussion paper:

There will...be pressure for government to ensure that the public's investment is strategically focused and that there is enough flexibility within the system to target that investment as circumstances dictate. Government also will require flexibility within and among publicly-funded institutions so universities can restructure as priorities change... The breadth of these pressures may have a direct effect on the traditional relationships between government and universities. In Ontario, universities exist in a relatively unregulated setting which reflects their traditional autonomy. ...[W]ith the exception of their individual enabling statutes, there is no legislation of specific application to universities that regulates the conduct of their business. They have a high degree of institutional autonomy which, it has been argued, is necessary to protect academic freedom. However, academic freedom has also been protected effectively in other more centrally co-ordinated jurisdictions.

OCUA went on to suggest that it was prepared to undertake a complete reconsideration of the underpinnings of the province's relationship with the universities:

In looking at the desirability of universities becoming more responsive to public policy priorities, the issue that may need to be considered is whether the administrative autonomy of universities legitimately or appropriately provides them with independence from government policy objectives and, if not, where the line is to be drawn between administrative and policy matters. Some who argue for more university autonomy believe that it encourages financial responsibility by resource users and greater responsiveness to changing societal needs through local control by governing boards or councils. Those who argue for limits on autonomy believe conversely that individual institutions, because of their collegial nature, are unable to make difficult decisions.⁵⁴⁵

In a nutshell, OCUA challenged the fundamental assumptions upon which university-government relations in Ontario had been built for almost 100 years. The "policy-flexibility" sought by OCUA, translated into greater government direction for the universities. In the language of the discussion paper, universities were unresponsive service providers that needed

545. *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

to become more responsive to their client, the government and its policies. Since, in OCUA's view, the "current funding mechanism for universities does not spell out clearly what the public is buying for its investment in universities...." the government must "be clearer about what it is buying on behalf of the public, and universities [need] to be clearer about what they are delivering."⁵⁴⁶ OCUA went on to propose new funding envelopes and approaches to policy on cost-recovery programs. But it was the three alternative funding models which would set the Council's public consultations with the university community afire.

Model A, a modified corridor system, represented only incremental change from the status quo but would remove some "deterrents to the achievement of [policy] objectives". Model B would eliminate the corridor funding system and make institutional funding more sensitive to enrolment levels and therefore highly sensitive to government accessibility policies. Model C, "Purchase of Service System", proposed an entirely new system that would fundamentally change the government-university funding relationship, making government an active partner in determining institutional mission and the relative balance among teaching, research and community service in which each institution was engaged. The underlying theme of the discussion paper was the search for new policies, instruments and mechanisms that would bring universities, and their internal decision-making choices regarding the allocation of resources, under more direct influence, and perhaps if not authority, then control, of the provincial government. Although OCUA did not rank the three options, the university system reacted to the discussion paper as if Model C - "Purchase of Service" was the Council's preferred option since the Council's analysis of each option suggested that Model C had the

546. *Ibid.*, p. 47.

greatest potential to provide the government with the policy flexibility it desired, despite the potential for “a negative impact on the institutional autonomy Ontario universities have traditionally enjoyed.”⁵⁴⁷

Since there had never been an ongoing master plan for university development, nor a comprehensive policy framework placing parameters around university-government relations in Ontario, the incentives and disincentives inherent in the Ontario university funding mechanism had, by default, been the primary expression, and in some policy areas the only expression, of provincial government policy *vis-a-vis* universities. OCUA recognized this in its discussion paper:

University funding allocation mechanisms are an essential element in defining the relationship between universities and governments. Their design both shapes and is shaped by the nature of this relationship. Funding allocation mechanisms are not neutral conduits of grants, but policy instruments which affect the actions of institutions and individuals. In Ontario, the funding allocation mechanism is the most significant instrument of provincial Government policy.⁵⁴⁸

The entire resource allocation exercise was received from the outset with scathing hostility on the part of the universities. As J. Stefan Dupré noted in a November 11, 1994 address to the Queen’s University Board of Trustees:

Today, as it enters its twenty-first year, OCUA is the recipient of severe criticism from the Ontario university community. What is alleged is that OCUA has forsaken its buffering role and degenerated into a mouthpiece of the Government. ... I consider that this criticism is as unfairly premature as its context is eminently understandable.

547. *Ibid.*, p. 60.

548. *Ibid.*, p. 49.

Dupré, himself a former chair of OCUA, continued:

In calling this criticism unfairly premature, I have in mind that to be a buffer is to live with occasionally vehement criticism from both universities and government. The current chorus of university criticism overlooks the fact that OCUA's present root-and-branch reappraisal of the university funding system is in direct response to a Ministerial reference and that Ministerial capacity to make such discretionary references has been a prominent feature of OCUA's buffering role since its inception. I shall persist in considering the current wave of university criticism as unfairly premature until I see OCUA's advice, which I trust will confirm that the Council remains faithful to its buffer role once it elicits a critical reaction from Government.⁵⁴⁹

Critical reaction from the university community quickly followed OCUA's distribution of its *Discussion Paper*. In addition to expressions of fundamental disagreement with the objectives and assumptions of the paper, the university community felt OCUA had betrayed its "arms-length" buffer role and moved from the "finger-tip" to the "arm-pit" of government. As Skolnik's analysis of submissions in response to the OCUA discussion paper reveals, the university community was "deeply disturbed by the way in which OCUA appears to have transformed itself into an agency of government, rather than an arms-length body"⁵⁵⁰ and perceived OCUA to be abdicating its independent, buffer role by aligning itself too closely with the government's agenda.

The university community took issue with many of the arguments and assumptions made in the discussion paper. A number of the arguments raised within the system expose fundamental positions within the university community that have acted as barriers to the development of system-level coordination and planning. Universities forcefully rejected the

549. J. Stefan Dupré, *When Does Accountability Become Accountabilitis?*, An Address to the Queen's University Board of Trustees, November 11, 1994, Mimeograph, p. 2.

550. Michael Skolnik, "Upsetting the Balance: The Debate on Proposals for Radically Altering the Relationship Between Universities and Government in Ontario", *Ontario Journal of Higher Education*, Toronto: Higher Education Group, OISE, 1995, p. 10, quoting the submission of the Canadian Association of University Teachers, 1994, p. 2.

Discussion Paper's promotion of universities as instruments of public policy. As Carleton University indicated:

The central issue in [the Discussion paper] is the degree to which universities should be instruments of government policy...Universities are autonomous institutions engaged in intellectual enquiry. Any attempt to force them into the role of policy instruments of government impairs their effectiveness within a modern democratic society.⁵⁵¹

The view of universities best serving the public interest through independence from rather than subordination to government was a key plank in the university community's platform against the OCUA proposals. Another implication of the *Discussion Paper* was that universities could reallocate resources from research to undergraduate teaching to better meet the government's accessibility objectives in a constrained fiscal environment. For a number of universities, this raised the spectre of institutional role differentiation or institutional tiering. Brock University, for example, stated it would "reject any attempt to stratify the university system on the basis of 'research intensity' or to restrict the activities of any university to just the teaching and learning functions".⁵⁵²

A defense of the principle of institutional autonomy was another line of attack the universities mounted to discredit the OCUA Discussion Paper. The potential for increased centralization of decision-making with respect to internal institutional allocation of resources posed by Model C - Purchase of Service model, provoked Queen's University to observe:

While some may well believe central control of universities will somehow improve decision-making, such a belief runs counter to existing views about the effectiveness of organizations. Rather, increasingly, the virtues of decentralization and local control are being heralded, encouraged, and celebrated in both the private and public sectors.⁵⁵³

551. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

552. *Ibid.*, p.17.

553. *Ibid.*, p.18.

Even the University of Toronto, which had during previous commissions' hearings submitted briefs endorsing greater system coordination and planning, argued that "effective use of resources and control of costs are managed best at the institutional level," and that "in terms of responsiveness, adaptation, and restructuring, the need for flexibility...is much greater than the need for close control..."⁵⁵⁴ Other institutions argued that local university decision-making and control could more efficiently and effectively meet the needs and expectations of the public than any centralized provincial bureaucracy.

OCUA traveled the province undertaking public consultation and was received with considerable hostility by a number of university administrators and faculty. The prospect of the funding mechanism being used as the instrument through which to make universities more responsive, efficient, and accountable was viewed as an attempt to micro-manage the institutions. In fact, most institutions indicated a preference for retaining the existing corridor mechanism, noting that it was working relatively well and could be modified to meet new needs as they arose. OCUA returned from its deliberations with the university community somewhat scarred. The tenor of the exchanges at some hearings hit a record low, disintegrating into personal attacks levied on the OCUA chair and personal criticisms of some members of the council. As the former chair of OCUA recalls:

...the level of research that was going on [at OCUA] was potentially threatening. [OCUA] was caught up in...a strong anti-NDP backlash that was going on. And, OCUA had been cast as a body that had second rate members by many people and that this was the fault of the NDP government.⁵⁵⁵

554. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

555. Interview with Joy Cohnstaedt, April 17, 1997.

A number of observers of the scene at that time described the concern around OCUA members in a variety of ways. Some suggested that previous OCUA members had “closer mind sets to university administrators” whereas some of the more recent appointments to OCUA were perceived to be “much more interventionist and had axes to grind.” Others thought the problem rested with the credibility of some OCUA members within the academic community. Still others thought that the problem arose from OCUA’s capacity in terms of membership and staff to undertake a reference of such complexity.

The then Deputy Minister suggested that part of deterioration in the relationship between OCUA and the universities was rooted in self-interest:

Whenever you change your resource allocation mechanism or even throw these things up for grabs, usually you can get at least...half of the institutions to say this is a good idea and the other...half to say this is a bad idea, but everybody seemed to be upset about moving off the status quo. When it suits the universities they will be a system, but philosophically, of course, they don’t want to be a system. There are no rewards for system behaviour. So it isn’t a university system, therefore, there is no university planning.⁵⁵⁶

In the end, the far reaching review that had been requested by the government, and to whose objectives the recommendations were so closely tied, ended up in the hands of the newly elected Progressive Conservative government’s Minister of Education and Training, John Snobelen, himself a self-made businessman and high school drop-out. On June 27, 1995, OCUA delivered its advice on resource allocation for Ontario universities to the two week old Conservative government, and its new Minister of Education and Training. Throughout July, OCUA staff provided the Minister and senior bureaucrats with technical briefings, explaining the workings of the proposed new funding scheme. As recommended by OCUA in its advice,

556. Interview with Charles Pascal, April 15, 1997.

the Minister released the document to the university community on July 28, 1995 inviting comments by September 30, 1995. Universities found the advice nothing short of outrageous.

In the end, OCUA had held firm to its commitment to a greater say for government in university affairs and a greater degree of system coordination and planning:

Council believes that the system of publicly funded legally autonomous universities should be maintained, but that provision for more effective system coordination and planning and for Government to express the public interest should also be made. It is recommended that this be accomplished primarily through the proposed modifications to the funding allocation system and associated policy mechanisms.⁵⁵⁷

The proposed new funding regime centered on a cost-based funding allocation system linked to negotiated activity levels and outcomes, which would replace the existing system and eliminate historical funding anomalies whereby institutions received different levels of funding per student.⁵⁵⁸ The advice also called for greater institutional planning, facilitating institutional differentiation. System-level assessments of the "societal need" for graduates of professional and quasi-professional discipline areas or sectors were recommended to aid in the assessment of the need for new and existing academic programs. OCUA recommended that policies mandating transfer of credit among universities to the degree recommended by the Council of Ministers of Education of Canada (CMEC) - namely full credit transfer for the first two years of study in similar programs - be in place as a condition of eligibility to receive provincial grants. The implementation of program quality reviews for all academic programs or departments was recommended. Effectively, this applied only to undergraduate programs since

557. Ontario Council on University Affairs, *Advisory Memorandum 95-III, Resource Allocation for Ontario Universities*, June 1995, p. 23.

558. The differential funding levels resulted from the historical practices of discounting the value of enrolments for funding purposes at various times and by differing percentages. In the result, depending on when institutions experienced enrolment growth, their level of base operating income per basic income unit varied significantly.

a graduate process for academic quality reviews was already in place.

For its part, government was called upon to delineate its public policy priorities clearly. OCUA argued: “For effective coordination and planning...[t]here must be a sense of system mission, priorities, provincial needs and the environment faced by universities.”⁵⁵⁹ Accountability provisions pertaining to stewardship of resources, quality assurance, ethics, and transparency practices were codified and linked to eligibility for public funds.

Once again, the lack of decision-support data “to permit informed judgements” frustrated policy development efforts during the review. That this had been a long-standing impediment to system coordination and planning was highlighted by OCUA:

...little system data exist. When information is available, it is often incomplete, fragmented and not comparable across institutions. The lack of consistent, high quality information about Ontario’s university system has been a long standing problem...and has, in general made it difficult to conduct in-depth policy research into university-related issues.⁵⁶⁰

OCUA attempted to strike a new policy direction that encouraged decentralized decision-making within a framework of processes, rather than administrative structures, for system coordination and planning. As the then OCUA Chair, explained:

There are different strategies for change...significant cuts in terms of grants, requiring immediate, dramatic accommodation to it [is one model]. You’ve got RAR, which...is an example of another model. [RAR] was an effort to undertake the accommodation...in a more orderly way and on a more systematic and system-wide basis rather than the type of *ad hoc* accommodation to dramatic declines in grants and increases in student fees.⁵⁶¹

The implications for OCUA’s role, however, involved functions not unlike those of state

559. Ontario Council on University Affairs, *Advisory Memorandum 95-III, Resource Allocation for Ontario Universities*, June 1995, p. 24.

560. *Ibid.*, p. 62.

561. Interview with Joy Cohnstaedt, April 17, 1997.

coordinating boards in the United States and might have required that OCUA assume a degree of authority within the system which would have exceeded its existing advisory mandate. Despite this, OCUA clearly attempted to “sell” its advice as a modification of current practices:

Council has concluded that radical or fundamental change in university operations and the relationship between Government and universities is not warranted at this time. The type of relationship recommended between Government and universities is evolutionary in nature, and responds to the changing environment faced by universities. It regularizes and builds upon the type of approach adopted by Council in the 1989-90 Corridor Negotiations.⁵⁶²

The university community rejected this interpretation of events. It was evident that the 1989-90 corridor negotiations posed a unique situation and OCUA, while successfully coordinating the redistribution of resources at that time, had been working in an environment where additional resources were available rather than in the “zero-sum” context of 1995. Although restructuring initiatives undertaken in other jurisdictions such as the United Kingdom,⁵⁶³ to enable universities to meet policy objectives under conditions of severe fiscal constraint were similar to a number of the OCUA recommendations, these changes had been legislated by government. Neither the Ontario universities, nor the Ontario government to whom OCUA delivered its advice appeared willing to see university-government relations undergo such a dramatic shift away from past practices.

The Council of Ontario Universities pointed to the inappropriateness of a radical

562. Ontario Council on University Affairs, *Advisory Memorandum 95-III: Resource Allocation for Ontario Universities*, *op cit.*, p. 25.

563. It is interesting to observe that OCUA positioned its analysis of the issues within the context of national and international restructuring developments that were occurring or had occurred elsewhere. During the University Restructuring Steering Committee-Resource Allocation Reference (RAR) period, OCUA’s senior policy advisor travelled to the United Kingdom to gather information on restructuring developments there and OCUA staff engaged in a detailed review and kept a watching brief on postsecondary restructuring ways and means in other Canadian and international jurisdictions.

change to university funding that in its view “would not leave our universities or our Province any better off and would impose an unnecessarily restrictive, bureaucratic set of controls.”⁵⁶⁴

The Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations stated:

Council was told clearly and unanimously last year that the funding mechanism didn't need a major overhaul, that greater government intervention was dangerous, that universities were already responsive to their communities, and that teaching, research and service were interdependent parts of a seamless whole. Their advice ignores this.⁵⁶⁵

COU concurred with OCUFA's position, and characterized OCUA's Resource Allocation advice as a relic of the previous government, designed to address an accessibility problem which never presented itself, citing the 40% increase in enrolment that universities had accommodated since the 1980s. It also argued that the operating grants funding mechanism “represented a singularly inappropriate tool” with which to build a new relationship between universities and the government, and that the OCUA proposal would have imposed considerable bureaucratic and administrative burdens on both government and the institutions at a time when flexibility was critical. In the fall of 1995, COU called upon the Minister

to reject [OCUA's] view of the future of higher education in Ontario and to replace it with a vision of autonomous institutions working in close cooperation with each other and with the Provincial Government to create and maintain universities of the highest quality, universities which can play a major role in the economic, social and cultural future of Ontario.⁵⁶⁶

COU enjoined the Minister to reject OCUA's recommendations to establish the Core

564. Bonnie Patterson, President, Council of Ontario Universities, to the Honourable John Snobelen, Minister of Education and Training, September 20, 1995, Attachment, “Submission to the Minister of Education and Training on the OCUA Advisory Memorandum 95-III,” p. 1.

565. Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations, *Forum*, Vol. 11, No. 1, September, October 1995, p. 1.

566. Bonnie Patterson, President, Council of Ontario Universities, to the Honourable John Snobelen, Minister of Education and Training, September 20, 1995, Attachment, “Submission to the Minister....” *op cit.*, p. 6.

Funding Envelope and to “delay indefinitely any major changes to the funding formula” arguing that replacement of the current formula would be “needlessly disruptive to the relationships between the universities, OCUA and the Provincial Government.”⁵⁶⁷ COU argued against the recommendation that government withhold operating grants for institutions not meeting the credit transfer standards and accountability criteria described in the OCUA advice, arguing that “Ontario universities continue to enhance the self-regulatory accountability framework which maintains the locus of accountability within each institutions’ board of governors.”⁵⁶⁸ The prospect of OCUA undertaking academic reviews to determine societal need was rejected on the grounds that it would “lead to further bureaucratic controls and a high probability of major planning errors.”⁵⁶⁹

From the Ministry’s point of view, the advice received from OCUA was deemed to be too complex and too disruptive to the universities. Given the universities’ need for stability to make adjustments in view of the budget reductions to the university sector of approximately \$263 million out of a total reduction of \$400 million to the postsecondary sector that had been announced on November 29, 1995, the government decided not to implement any new funding mechanisms. By letter of November 30, 1995, the Minister politely and rather indirectly, rejected the OCUA advice.⁵⁷⁰

In fact, three weeks previous, the Minister had publicly stated that he intended to launch his own study of the postsecondary education policy framework.

567. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

568. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

569. *Ibid.*

570. Honourable John C. Snobelen, Minister of Education and Training, to Stefan Dupré, Interim Chair, Ontario Council on University Affairs, November 30, 1995.

4.4 Rediscovering the Foundations of University-Government Relations in Ontario

Another turning point in university-government relations had occurred in mid-1995. The June 8, 1995 provincial election, which saw the New Democratic government defeated by the Ontario Progressive Conservative party, unleashed an entirely different political agenda.

The postsecondary policy agenda developed by the Progressive Conservative caucus in 1992, styled *New Directions II - A Blueprint for Learning in Ontario*, had suggested that, if elected, the Progressive Conservatives would pursue a smaller role for government in respect to university affairs and financing. The *Blueprint* proposed “partnership funding”, with students, the government and the private sector all increasing their contributions, in a balanced way, to restore colleges and universities to sound financial health.⁵⁷¹ This new partnership, as detailed in the party’s *Blueprint for Learning* document, envisioned increased tuition fees combined with an expanded student loan program premised on the introduction of an income-contingent loan repayment scheme as well as enhanced institutional scholarship and bursary programs. It presumed that greater private sector support for higher education in the form of research and development would be achieved through increased corporate productivity and competitiveness. Institutions would be encouraged to increasingly specialize in, for example, research and graduate studies or in undergraduate studies. Public accountability would be enhanced through “value-for-money” audits of universities. It suggested that the restriction on private, degree-granting universities would be lifted, albeit with assurance that such institutions would be self-supporting, of acceptable quality and focus on “areas of emerging

571. Ontario Progressive Conservative Caucus, *New Directions Volume Two: A Blueprint for Learning in Ontario*, October 1992, p. 24.

need."⁵⁷² Postsecondary education policy flowed from a policy platform that envisioned less and smaller government, lower taxes, higher levels of voluntarism, and greater personal and private sector responsibility for the well-being of society.

In the months leading up to the 1995 provincial election, the prospect of the election of a much less interventionist government, and the conspicuously lagging political fortunes of the NDP and pending retirement of the OCUA Chair, encouraged the universities to take a wait and see approach to university-government relations.

In August 1995, Joy Cohnstaedt completed her term as Chair of OCUA, diffusing some of the hostility in the system toward the Council which had been directed, rightly or wrongly, at her personally. Peter George, the President of COU, with whom relations with OCUA throughout the period of the Resource Allocation Review exercise had been particularly acrimonious, had assumed the Presidency of McMaster University. In an effort to salvage some credibility for the Council and appease an extremely disgruntled university sector, during the final days before the writs were dropped for the spring election the government appointed J. Stefan Dupré, a highly respected professor of Political Science at the University of Toronto, to assume the Chair of OCUA upon the conclusion of Joy Cohnstaedt's term. Dupré, who had been the first Chair of OCUA in 1974, reassumed the OCUA helm on September 1, 1995, having stipulated that it be on an interim basis, and only until such time as the new government could make its own appointment and rehabilitate the Council in terms of its membership and mandate. Some of the OCUA membership was perceived by the universities and the Ministry to have become weakened and politicized,⁵⁷³ and the universities felt that

572. *Ibid.* p. 26.

573. Interview with Senior Ministry Official, April 10, 1997 and with Charles Pascal, April 15, 1997.

OCUA's mandate had become too interventionist based on their observations of the Council during the Resource Allocation Review process.⁵⁷⁴ The university system was given a large measure of comfort in the appointment of Stefan Dupré as OCUA Chair,⁵⁷⁵ and was reassured by the new Conservative Minister's commitment to consult broadly on the development of a new policy framework to guide future university policy.

However, there was to be no opportunity to rehabilitate the government's 22 year old university intermediary/advisory body. Once in power, the Harris government acted rapidly on its September 1995 Throne Speech promise to restructure government's role and reduce its size and scope. In a November 8, 1995 speech to the governing board Chairs of Ontario's universities, the Minister, John C. Snobelen, invited the Chairs to

...identify the tools you will need to increase flexibility, improve efficiency and reduce costs. I need and want your suggestions regarding any legislation, statutes or regulations that you consider to be an impediment in university restructuring, or in addressing labour relations issues."⁵⁷⁶

In its Fiscal and Economic Statement in November 1995, the government announced the establishment of a 12 member Task Force on Agencies, Boards and Commissions, to be chaired by Bob Wood, MPP London South, and parliamentary assistant to the chair of Management Board. The Task Force was to review the need for over 200 arm's-length agencies having responsibilities such as providing advice to government, providing goods and services, settling disputes or making regulatory decisions. A review of government advisory

574. Many universities had indicated that they thought OCUA "simply ought to have refused to do resource allocation." Interview with Joy Cohnstaedt, April 17, 1997.

575. Although at this point in time, some Presidents were so disillusioned with OCUA, that they felt that the appointment of Dupré was too late in coming to make much difference. Interview with Robert Roseheart, President, Lakehead University, April 8, 1997.

576. Remarks by the Honourable John C. Snobelen, Minister of Education and Training, Ontario, to the Board Chairs of Ontario Universities, November 8, 1995.

agencies was completed first. As a result of the Task Force's recommendations, on May 29, 1996, Management Board Chairman David Johnson announced the elimination of 22 advisory agencies of which OCUA was one, stating:

As a result of the review by the Government Task Force on Agencies, Boards and Commissions, taxpayers will no longer be paying for organizations whose work is no longer relevant. At the same time, the government wants to continue to receive advice from the community, but we want to look at options that are less structured than what we have now."⁵⁷⁷

It was noted that the 22 agencies slated for closure had "completed their work or [their] mandates are obsolete..."⁵⁷⁸

The May 29, 1996 announcement of the closure of the Ontario Council on University Affairs and its Academic Advisory Committee, effective August 31, 1996, came as somewhat of a surprise to the Council. OCUA had been anticipating that Bob Woods' Task Force would consult the Council concerning its mission, mandate and role, and a submission to that effect had been in preparation. However, such a request never came. The Ministry of Education and Training had been providing the Task Force with the justification for OCUA's continuation, and while some had expected that the Council would persist at least until a policy framework review scheduled for spring 1996 had been completed,⁵⁷⁹ the number and political significance of primary and secondary educational issues overshadowed consideration of postsecondary sector issues, and the majority of the individuals in leadership positions within the ministry for postsecondary education issues at that time were either relatively new to the field of

577. Ontario, Management Board Secretariat, News Release, *Government Acts on First Phase of Agency Task Force Review*, May 29, 1996.

578. *Ibid.*

579. This review was delayed by the Ministry's inability to produce a discussion paper that met with Ministerial approval. Although originally touted to be released in spring 1996, it was not formally made public until July 16, 1996. In the interim a number of draft versions had been leaked to the education desk of the *Globe and Mail*.

education or were from the Education side of the ministry and knew practically nothing about the postsecondary sector.⁵⁸⁰ In addition, due to a series of restructuring and reengineering exercises in the ministry, expertise and knowledge about postsecondary issues and OCUA were interspersed with elementary/secondary issues along functional lines throughout various units within the Ministry. The generic questionnaire that was completed in response to a request for Ministry justification for the need for OCUA was responded to primarily by an official who had had a career within the elementary-secondary education sector and it was done “without any senior people giving a lot of thought to what this meant from a policy perspective and in terms of our relationship with the universities.”⁵⁸¹ The university presidents, having debated the need for OCUA while at a retreat in Elora, Ontario on August 31, 1995, had concluded that OCUA should be retained as the sector’s intermediary body, although when pressed to explain what they would want to see OCUA do, were uncertain.⁵⁸²

However, once the Council’s closure was announced in May, shortly thereafter it effectively ceased to operate. The Council’s final meeting had been held on May 10, 1996 at which it approved its terminal advisory memorandum. The interim chair, J. Stefan Dupré, with the honour, as he described it, of having been the “book-ends” of Council’s history, accelerated his transition to the position of President of the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research (CIAR), and departed the Council on July 1, 1996. Council staff was transferred to

580. Interview with Senior Ministry Official, April 10, 1997. The Deputy Minister of Education at that time, Richard Dicerni, was a former senior federal public servant and had little background in either primary/secondary or postsecondary education. Of the five Assistant Deputy Ministers, four were from primary/secondary Education backgrounds and the one that had a postsecondary background was in the Organization Development and Services division. Postsecondary issues were combined with primary/secondary education issues along functional lines as a shared responsibility of the remaining four divisions.

581. *Ibid.*

582. Interview with Bob Rosehart, 1997.

positions within the Ministry of Education and Training. In early July, two former OCUA staff members⁵⁸³ were further reassigned to the Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education, which was formally announced on July 16, 1996 in concert with the release of the Ministry of Education and Training's discussion paper entitled *Future Goals for Ontario Colleges and Universities*.

4.4.1 *The Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education in Ontario*

In fall 1995, the Ontario Minister of Education and Training had informed the university system of his intention to launch a review of government policy pertaining to the postsecondary sector. In a speech to the Board Chairs of Ontario Universities, the Minister said:

Universities, like other educational institutions and the government itself, will have to restructure and rationalize to come to grips with the reality that there is less tax money available, and there will continue to be less tax money available for the foreseeable future. So, when I tell you today to plan for significant additional cuts from both the provincial and federal government, you should understand that I am talking now about cuts on a scale never seen before in our postsecondary sector. That will mean setting priorities and sticking to them. It will mean living within your means. And planning for major change, fundamental change, in the way you work. It will mean downsizing, rationalizing, even eliminating in some areas. ...

And so, this brings us to an interesting choice. The government can simply apply whatever cuts are eventually decided upon for the sector and leave the universities to manage as best they can. But I'm not convinced it would be the best approach. Instead, I suggest we could engage in a focussed discussion of some key issues on the future directions and policies the government might adopt with respect to the postsecondary sector. In suggesting this, I have been made aware of the long history of studies and reports which have not been acted upon, or which simply missed the mark in terms of what was required.

583. Of which one was the author.

Given the pressure we are under, this exercise would need to be very focussed. ...The status quo won't do. So we will have to consider some significant changes. As the government, we can initiate the discussion. But, we depend on you to ensure results. Unless this discussion is taken up by you, in a serious and constructive way, this too will go the way of many studies of the past that I'm sure you all remember too well.⁵⁸⁴

So, less than six months after the Minister of Education and Training received OCUA's advice on a new funding framework, the Minister announced his intention to establish a three-person advisory group to begin consultations in January 1996. Working with a discussion paper that would be prepared by the Ministry of Education and Training, this group would "review and update the policy framework within which [the government] currently make[s] decisions concerning postsecondary education."⁵⁸⁵

On July 16, 1996, six months later than originally anticipated, the discussion paper was released on the future goals of Ontario's postsecondary sector and the establishment of a five-member "blue ribbon committee," designated the "Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education," was announced. Universities entered into public debate equipped with various restructuring prescriptions. In particular, Paul Davenport, President of the University of Western Ontario had been promoting a particular vision around the province in 1996 that involved a combination of deregulation and restructuring.⁵⁸⁶ In May 1996, Davenport noted that universities could "see a window of opportunity over the next six months for changing the regulatory environment."⁵⁸⁷ Davenport argued:

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584. Remarks by the Honourable John C. Snobelen, Minister of Education and Training, Ontario, to the Board Chairs of Ontario Universities, November 8, 1995.
585. Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, *Future Goals for Ontario Colleges and Universities: Discussion Paper*, July 1996, p. 2.
586. For example, Paul Davenport made public presentations in this regard at the annual meeting of the Canadian Society for the Study of Higher Education, St. Catharines, Ontario, May 24, 1996 and The Canadian Institute's conference, "Restructuring Post-Secondary Education", May 1, 1996.
587. Paul Davenport, Remarks at the annual conference of the Canadian Society for the Study of Higher Education, May 24, 1996, author's personal notes.

In years past ministry appeals to the universities to “restructure and rationalize programs” were unsuccessful, in large part because the Ministry itself had removed all incentives for restructuring, by controlling the essential variables of the system (fees in each and every program, grants which can be cut if programs are eliminated or reduced in size). It is time to break out of this unfortunate pattern of over-regulation, and allow for the growth [of] a competitive, deregulated environment in which restructuring will be a natural outcome of each institutions’ efforts to increase quality and build on strengths. ...The Common Sense Revolution set out a program for higher education of severe budget cuts and deregulation. We have had the cuts. It is now time to deliver the deregulation, which will benefit our institutions, our students, and the Province as a whole.⁵⁸⁸

COU for its part, had been providing orientation material for university board members since 1995, which, in a section entitled “Deregulation,” asserted:

Universities in Ontario are a highly regulated industry. The provincial government and, to a lesser extent, the federal government impose a multitude of regulations to control the activities of Ontario universities. ... Deregulation of the university environment has become a major concern because of the twin pressures of government demands in a whole host of areas and of underfunding. ...The greatest chances of moving toward reduced regulation appears [sic] to be in the area of tuition fees. By increasing allowable tuition fees, particularly discretionary fees, greater flexibility is provided to institutions in setting tuition fees and in determining university income. Meanwhile, governments continue to come up with new and more intrusive ways to attempt to micro-manage universities.⁵⁸⁹

Despite the fact that in comparison to most U.S. jurisdictions, the U.K. and Australia, Ontario universities enjoy a relatively high degree of autonomy and were constrained by very limited state system coordination and planning apparatus outside of the incentives and disincentives built into the formula funding mechanism, the perception that Ontario universities were generally over-regulated seemed to take hold. In the past, this perception had been most closely associated with the determination of tuition fees because the Ontario

588. Paul Davenport, “Deregulation and Restructuring”, speaking notes for The Canadian Institute Conference on Restructuring Post-Secondary Education”, Toronto, May 1, 1996, p. 20-21.

589. Council of Chairs of Universities of Ontario, *Briefing Notes for the Orientation of Members of Governing Bodies of Ontario Universities*, Toronto: Council of Ontario Universities, 1994/12/15, pp. 16.1 -16.3.

government effectively dictated tuition fee levels by stipulating that actual fees charged in excess of formula fees would yield a corresponding reduction in operating grants.

The Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education was directed to consult with stakeholders and the general public and provide the government with advice on three key issues:

1. the most appropriate sharing of costs among students, the private sector and government, and ways in which this might best be achieved;
2. ways to promote and support co-operation between colleges and universities, and between them and the secondary school system in order to meet the changing needs of students; and
3. ways to meet expected levels of demand for postsecondary education, with reference to existing public institutions and existing or proposed private institutions.⁵⁹⁰

Economist David C. Smith, principal emeritus of Queen's University, Kingston, was selected to chair the Panel, which included Fred W. Gorbet, Catherine Henderson, Bette Stephenson, and David M. Cameron.⁵⁹¹ The Panel was given a small research and clerical staff and five months in which to undertake extensive public hearings and prepare its report. Between September 25 and October 31, 1996, the panel held 11 days of public hearings across Ontario and received 185 written briefs.

A desire for change was prevalent during the period in which the Commission was developing its advice. In October, at a meeting of the Association of Universities and Colleges

590. Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education, *Excellence, Accessibility, Responsibility: Report of the Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education*, Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario, December, 1996, p. 1.

591. Fred W. Gorbet was Senior Vice President, Operational Services (U.S.), Manulife Financial. Toronto and former federal Deputy Minister of Finance; Catherine Henderson was President of Centennial College, Scarborough; Bette Stephenson was former Minister of Education and of Colleges and Universities, Richmond Hill; and David M. Cameron was Chair of the Department of Political Science, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, had written extensively on higher education in Canada and was also a member of the Nova Scotia Council on Higher Education and the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission.

of Canada (the first one in a decade to be open to the media) universities met to discuss how they could deliver high-quality undergraduate programs consistent with rising public expectations of university education in an environment where federal and provincial government support continued to decline. John Stubbs, President of Simon Fraser University, stated: “ We know the old model is not going to carry us into the 21st century...there is an appetite for change. People want to do new things.”⁵⁹² Paul Grayson, head of the Institute for Social Research at York University indicated that one of the major problems facing universities in convincing governments to adopt particular policies is their lack of institutional research on higher education in Canada, and that this was “a very serious deficiency”. He noted further, given government pressure to reduce expenditures that “in the absence of data, provincial governments can assume whatever they want.”⁵⁹³ (And so, for that matter, could universities!) This was certainly the context in which the Advisory Panel found itself during its brief six month existence.

The Advisory Panel on Future Directions met the Minister’s deadline of December 15, 1996 and its report, entitled *Excellence, Accessibility, Responsibility*, was released to the public on Monday December 16, 1996. The thrust of the report’s 18 recommendations emphasized both less regulation and deregulation, accompanied by greater responsibilities for, and public accountability by the institutional governing bodies; greater voluntary differentiation among institutions and a commitment on the part of the individuals, the private sector and government to ensure the financial resources available to institutions and students facing financial barriers to access were adequate.

592. Jennifer Lewington, “Universities urged to deliver goods”, *Globe and Mail*, October 3, 1996, p. A10.

593. *Ibid.*

In its introductory remarks, the Panel telegraphed its intention to endorse generally the structural *status quo* in Ontario postsecondary education: “The Panel believes that the basic structure of Ontario’s postsecondary sector is sound. There is no need to impose a grand new design.”⁵⁹⁴ Therein, Ontario’s binary divide between colleges and their diplomas and universities and their degrees, was sanctioned as appropriate for the 21st century. The Robarts policy of accessibility was reaffirmed and restated as follows:

Postsecondary education must evolve in a way which provides the opportunity for a high-quality learning experience to every Ontarian who is motivated to seek it and who has the ability to pursue it.⁵⁹⁵

A review of the Panel’s recommendations makes very clear there was no place for government-led system coordination and planning in Ontario. The Panel deemed the number of institutions sufficient for the foreseeable future, and that institutional differentiation, program rationalization and inter-institutional articulation would evolve naturally as inter-institutional competition drove institutions toward greater program and service specialization. The Panel argued that the deregulation of tuition fees combined with enhanced financial assistance for students in need would force institutions to become more accountable to students, parents and private donors.

Although the Panel recommended the establishment of an advisory body on postsecondary matters covering colleges and universities, they did not conclude that this body should be given authority to undertake system coordination and planning. Rather, its role would appear to be primarily one of providing research and the oversight of institutional

594. Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education, *Excellence, Accessibility, Responsibility: Report of the Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education, op cit.*, p. 2.

595. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

accountability that made it more similar to the oversight body recommended by the Broadhurst Task Force on University Accountability or the Senior Advisory Committee advocated by the Commission on Post-Secondary Education in Ontario (Wright Commission) than to the university system's former intermediary body, OCUA. The Panel's proposed advisory body would have a postsecondary mandate spanning colleges and universities and would:

... provide sustained, arms-length analysis of postsecondary education to help assure government, students, private organizations and other groups that critical assessments, independent reviews and advice are an ongoing feature of Ontario's postsecondary system...The body should be responsible for improving the publicly available information on postsecondary education and research. One of its responsibilities should be a regular report on the comparative strengths and weaknesses of Ontario's system relative to those in other jurisdictions. Another responsibility should be to monitor, assess and report upon the adequacy of quality assurance and accountability processes for both colleges and universities.⁵⁹⁶

With the abolition of the Ontario Council on University Affairs a mere four months previous, the Panel was careful to reassure government that while noting there were some "important issues that cannot be addressed adequately by a ministry of education or by associations of universities and colleges..." that:

In establishing such a body, measures should be taken to ensure that it not become an innovation-stifling regulatory body, an expensive addendum that consumes funds which should be directed towards the basic work of colleges and universities, or a place for inappropriate political appointments.

It would not be lost on the university community, nor the Ministry, that these caveats echoed precisely the university community's major criticisms of OCUA over the past few years. Distinguishing the proposed body even further from its predecessor, the recommended body appeared to have no mandate for policy development and no regulatory responsibilities with

596. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

one exception - it was to develop “conditions and standards” pertaining to the establishment of privately-financed, not-for-profit universities seeking authority to grant degrees with a secular name.⁵⁹⁷

The Panel sanctioned the financial foundation of university-government relations in the Province by reaffirming the appropriateness of a corridor approach to allocate public support to universities and recommending that a similar system be designed for the distribution of the operating grant to colleges of applied arts and technology. With respect to universities, the Panel, however, recommended that the workings of the corridor system become more flexible, so as to facilitate short term adjustments such as those caused by program closures and enable universities temporarily to reduce enrolment below their lower corridor limit without experiencing “severe financial penalty”.⁵⁹⁸ There was no mention of a centrally coordinated review or criteria for determining which programs should be closed.

The Panel noted that Ontario was in urgent need of a research policy pertaining to both basic and applied research undertaken in the private and public sectors and recommended an increase in the size of the Research Overheads/ Infrastructure Envelope from its current level of \$23 million to about \$100 million annually. Recommendations concerning the stabilization and eventual increase of operating grant levels, and recommendations related to additional funds for research were well received in the university community.

On December 20, 1996 the government announced that there would be no further cuts to transfer payment levels to postsecondary education. As for the recommendations on research, the Minister of Education and Training retained Panel chair, David C. Smith, in early

597. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

598. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

January 1997 to provide additional advice on the development of a provincial policy framework for research consistent with the Panel's recommendations.

The Panel was conservative in its response to the Minister's request for advice on ways to promote and support cooperation between colleges and universities. Though it had a mandate to consider the postsecondary sector in totality, the Panel recommended little to facilitate systematic college-university credit transfer beyond suggesting that the funding mechanism in the college sector be transformed into a corridor system similar to that used for university funding. It rejected the strategic decision taken by a number of other Canadian provinces such as British Columbia and Alberta, to treat postsecondary institutions as components of an integrated system rather than as discrete entities and to put in place independent, publicly-supported standing committees that coordinate and assure credit transfer among universities and between colleges and universities within their jurisdiction. Rather, the Panel stated its support for "a parallel system of differentiated colleges and universities" and endorsed a continuation of the work of the College-University Consortium Council (CUCC).⁵⁹⁹

The CUCC was established in 1996 by the Council of Ontario Universities and the Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology (ACAATO) with a two-year mandate to

facilitate, promote and coordinate joint education and training ventures that will: aid the transfer of students from sector to sector; facilitate the creation of joint programs between colleges and universities; and, further the development of a more seamless continuum of postsecondary education in Ontario.⁶⁰⁰

599. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

600. College-University Consortium Council, *Statement of Agreement- Mission Statement*, 1996, p. 3.

Funding for the Consortium's activities has been provided by the Ministry of Education and Training and will have expired by March 1998, after which the Consortium's role is in question. It does not currently have a mandate to go beyond allocating funds to promote joint education and training ventures, the establishment of an electronic credit transfer guide and undertaking research on postsecondary student mobility. Although the CUCC could have been transformed into a permanent structure with a long-term credit transfer function this was not recommended. The Panel did, however, suggest that: "The advisory body ... propose[d] in this report should be responsible for stimulating and monitoring the evolving linkages...."⁶⁰¹ between colleges and universities with respect to credit transfer, and shared services and facilities. What we see is a continued fragmentation of the system coordination and planning functions among the government, and the institutions, individually and collectively.

The Panel placed the task of postsecondary quality assurance squarely in the laps of governing boards and recommended that the establishment of internal processes for determining compensation levels and academic appointments that reward excellence in teaching and research and for ensuring "corrective measures" are taken where needed, also be their responsibility.

While there has been no formal COU response to the Panel's report, a COU press release indicated that "Ontario universities responded positively to the report" and that the "Panel's recommendations are...encouraging because they recognize the important role that our universities play in meeting the challenges of the 21st century."⁶⁰²

601. Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education, *Excellence, Accessibility, Responsibility: Report of the Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education*, *op cit.*, p. 9.

602. Council of Ontario Universities, "News Release-Universities respond positively to Smith Report", December 16, 1996.

Immediate response to the Panel's recommendations from a number of larger, research intensive universities was very supportive. University of Toronto President J. Robert S. Pritchard stated:

I give this report two thumbs up. It provides a policy framework to re-build Ontario's post secondary institutions for the 21st century. The challenge now is action and we will work vigorously with the province to ensure the report's implementation on an urgent basis... This report hits the nail on the head: a restoration of public funding, greater differentiation and less regulation, stronger student financial aid, tuition fee de-regulation, stronger support for research and innovation, focussed incentives for private sector support and partnerships, and a larger role for the governing bodies of our colleges and universities. These directions provide a very sound basis for optimism about the quality of university education for the next century.⁶⁰³

The report clearly responded to many of the positions that universities had been lobbying for. James Downey, president of the University of Waterloo and Chairman of the Council of Ontario Universities noted: "The panel has given the province of Ontario a marvellous holiday gift...I don't think they [the panel members] could have got it more right."⁶⁰⁴

The reaction of smaller, less research intensive universities was mixed. Student groups and faculty were quick to criticize the report on the grounds that partial deregulation through higher fees would potentially reduce access.⁶⁰⁵

The report of the Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education, the third in a series of major postsecondary reviews each 12 years apart (the others being the Wright [1972] and Bovey Commissions [1984]), is notable in a number of ways. It was the

603. University of Toronto, *Media Release: "Two thumbs Up." U of T President Says*, December 16, 1996.

604. James Downey, President, University of Waterloo and Chair, Council of Ontario Universities, quoted in Jennifer Lewington, "Panel opens door to private universities", *Globe and Mail*, Tuesday December 17, 1996, p. A8.

605. Jennifer Lewington, "Panel opens door to private universities", *Globe and Mail*, Tuesday December 17, 1996, p. A8.

first report since the Wright Commission's 1972 report, *The Learning Society*, that was required to examine post-secondary education in Ontario as a whole, rather than examining colleges and universities individually. However, the extremely short time-frame in which the Panel was given to undertake provincial consultations and prepare recommendations was in sharp contrast to the Wright Commission, which developed advice over a four year period or the Bovey Commission which was given 12 months within which to report.

It was also the first commission in the post-war period to advocate a policy framework for postsecondary education that accepted Ontario's *ad hoc* approach to policy, coordination and planning processes at face value and went on to advocate an even less regulated policy framework in the absence of an intermediary body. The Panel stated that its recommendations were intended to build on the legacy of the past, rather than impose "a grand new design". Its approach was guided by "[p]ragmatism, not ideology..."⁶⁰⁶ It clearly rejected centralized, government-led system-level coordination and planning as the appropriate approach to reviewing and updating the policy framework within which decisions concerning postsecondary education are made:

The servant of quality is specialization, requiring differentiation among our institutions. We cannot expect all to be excellent in everything. We cannot afford to support them as though they were. This is why we do not look for grand designs. Pushing institutions into prescribed boxes is not the route to quality. We believe profoundly that our postsecondary institutions need to have the room to experiment, to abandon what they cannot do well enough, and to concentrate their resources in areas in which they can. We want to free the creative spirit of the best minds within our institutions, not constrain them through central plans and regulatory controls. Equally important for both governmental and institutional leaders is that rewards must go to those who succeed and not to those who fail....⁶⁰⁷

606. Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education, *Excellence, Accessibility, Responsibility: Report of the Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education, op cit.*, p. 13.

607. *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

The spirit of the Panel's report envisioned a role for government that was significantly reduced from the regime which had been in place at the time that OCUA was closed. As Panel member Bette Stephenson put it during the press conference at the time of the release of the Panel's report on December 16, 1996:

I think that the...broad deregulation of the post-secondary system is the thing that's important. You know, regulations are marvelous. They put the post-secondary institutions into fleece-lined cages in which they're very comfortable and they don't really have to think very hard about what their role is related to a whole lot of responsibilities which they have to either students or the community or the business community or to the society; and if you take the regulations off, they suddenly are faced with reality.⁶⁰⁸

In 1994, Peter J. George, then President of the Council of Ontario Universities, had presented a paper at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development General Conference on Institutional Management in Higher Education, at which he articulated the Ontario universities' preference for a policy framework which would facilitate university accountability to government in the context of

an enhanced self-regulatory process, which would include, *inter alia*, graduate program quality appraisals and undergraduate program reviews, annual institutional accountability reports issued by each university's Board of Governors aimed at measuring success in meeting institutional mission, and a system-wide performance indicators and outcomes measures report prepared under the auspices of the Council of Ontario universities. These reports would all be released publicly, and would be subjected to periodic procedural audit by a process to be determined by the Minister of Education and Training and acceptable to the Provincial Auditor.⁶⁰⁹

Universities appear to have been provided an opportunity to realize the policy framework they

608. Dr. Bette Stephenson, from notes taken at the Press Conference releasing the Panel's report *Excellence, Accessibility, Responsibility*, Toronto, December 16, 1996.

609. Peter J. George, and James A. McAllister, *The Expanding Role of the State in Canadian Universities: Can University Autonomy and Accountability be Reconciled?*, Discussion Series, Issue 3, Toronto: Council of Ontario Universities, September 1994, p. 14.

Chapter 4: Coordination and Planning across the Postsecondary Sector, 1990-1996

so desired. Can they manage their affairs in such a way as to preserve this new footing for university-government relations in Ontario?

In the next chapter an in-depth examination is undertaken of efforts to enhance the coordination and planning of academic program development in Ontario.

Chapter 5: Coordination and Planning in Ontario: A Focus on Graduate Programming

From a broad examination of the history of recommendations related to managing the overall relationship between the universities and the provincial government from 1945 to 1996, we now move to a detailed examination of specific developments in relation to coordination and planning efforts in Ontario. The purpose of this section of the paper is to examine the history of academic program coordination and planning in the Province of Ontario from 1965 to 1996, where, historically, there has been a particular emphasis on the graduate program enterprise. Little research has been undertaken to date in the area of system-level academic coordination and planning in Ontario, whereas aspects of system coordination and planning related to the establishment of new institutions and the role of the funding mechanism have been recently studied.⁶⁰⁹

5.1 Overview

Enormous amounts of energy have been expended over the past thirty years toward the achievement of system-wide academic program planning in Ontario, especially at the graduate level. Academic planning and coordination was largely non-existent in Ontario prior to 1966. At that time, academic development was the responsibility of individual institutions and interinstitutional interaction was extremely limited. From 1966 to 1980, academic coordination

609. As previously noted, J. Paul Stenton recently undertook an assessment of the role of the funding mechanism in Ontario in 1992, entitled *The University Operating Grants Formula: Its Development to 1986*. In the area of the establishment of new universities in Ontario, Michael Skolnik has undertaken a number of research papers which touch on this subject including *State Control of Degree Granting: The Establishment of a Public Monopoly in Canada*, November 1986 and *Lipset's Continental Divide and the Ideological Basis for Differences in Higher Education between Canada and the United States*, November 15, 1989; as has the Ontario Council on University Affairs. See OCUA's *Eighteenth Annual Report 1991-92*, "Advisory Memorandum 91-V Establishment and Development of Provincially-Assisted Degree Granting Institutions in Ontario", "Advisory Memorandum 91-VI Development of Nipissing College" and "91-VII Development of Ryerson Polytechnical Institute", Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, 1992.

Chapter 5: Coordination and Planning in Ontario: A Focus on Graduate Programming

and planning at the system level focused primarily on the graduate enterprise. Graduate program planning became particularly important for a number of reasons: (1) In the mid-1960s, the quality of new graduate programs being mounted, especially at the newer universities was in question and the established institutions recognized that the existence of poor quality graduate programs would ultimately reflect negatively on the system as a whole. (2) The need to fill professorial positions in the late 1960s and early 1970s combined with the desire among faculty to be qualified to the doctoral level fuelled an expansion of graduate enrolments to a degree unparalleled in other sectors of university activity. (3) The high costs involved with graduate study and research resulted in high formula weights and correspondingly high claims on the public purse (under the funding formula introduced in 1967, one graduate student is funded, on average, at a level three times that of one undergraduate student, and a doctoral student is funded at six times the undergraduate student value per Basic Income Unit [BIU]). (4) High weights provided the levers enabling government to exercise its spending powers to buttress the universities' individual and collective efforts to address the issue of graduate program quality and development.

Over the years, graduate program planning had evolved into a responsibility shared among members of the university collectivity, with government involvement intentionally limited to assuring itself that the university collectivity in fact had such processes in place. By the early 1980s, the balance shifted away from collective autonomy in relation to academic program coordination and planning toward a sharing of responsibility and division of labour between the university collectivity and government. Reluctantly, government, through its intermediary body, assumed responsibility for system planning issues. While constituting roughly 90% of total full-time enrolment in the province, undergraduate program development

remained relatively unconstrained by system-level coordination and planning considerations.

With respect to program quality assurance and control, the university collectivity retained responsibility for academic quality with respect to graduate programs, via the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies. Undergraduate academic quality remained firmly under the control of individual institutions' Senates.

With the elimination of OCUA in mid-1996, its program funding and quality monitoring function notionally reverted back to the Ministry of Education and Training. However, for 1997 and beyond, it appears that the Ministry has largely abandoned both the advisory structures and processes for system-level academic planning and coordination that had developed. While still arguably a tripartite responsibility shared by institutions, the university collectivity and government, the bulk of the responsibility for academic program planning has been largely returned to the individual institutions with only a small role played by the university collectivity (program quality) and government (prevention of unjustifiable duplication of existing programs by new programs). The remainder of this chapter will examine the events and factors underlying these transformations in the university-government relationship.

5.2 The Nature of System-wide Academic Coordination and Planning

An enormous body of literature exists on academic planning and coordination, the bulk of which pertains to the experience, practices and trends in the United States. The underdeveloped state of Canadian research on system-level coordination and planning is even more characteristic of the field of Canadian academic coordination and planning. With the exception of the research of Edward Holdaway and Walter Harris of the University of Alberta,

Chapter 5: Coordination and Planning in Ontario: A Focus on Graduate Programming

which focuses on the systematic reviews of university programs and academic units in Alberta during the 1980s, the University of Calgary report of 1980 documenting program review practices and procedures, Grant Clarke's paper of the early 1980s providing a comparative North American perspective and the 1982 work of C.H. Bélanger and L.A. Tremblay detailing academic rationalization procedures at the University of Montreal in 1982, there is very little in the way of academic literature about program planning in Canada. While there are mechanistic descriptions of program funding processes, the academic quality appraisal process in Ontario, as well as material pertaining to the Ontario experience within the literature on university-government relations previously reviewed in Chapter 1, there is almost no recent material pertaining to system-level academic program planning and coordination in Ontario over the past decade. From the perspective of quality assurance alone, however, a recent, internationally-comparative work undertaken by H.R. Kells, *Self-Regulation in Higher Education*, notes that in terms of quality assurance and quality control, the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies' quality appraisals process stands as a model of self-regulation worthy of international emulation.⁶¹⁰

Lyman Glenny suggests there are a number of advantages of statewide coordination and planning related to academic programs:

- a lessening or elimination of tension and conflict among institutions;
- a relative advantage to smaller institutions, which are typically better off in a coordinated environment;
- differential functions providing some protection from encroachment by other institutions;

610. H. R. Kells, *Self-Regulation in Higher Education: A Multi-National Perspective on Collaborative Systems of Quality Assurance and Control*, London: Jessica Kingsley, 1992, p. 121. The weight of Kells' conclusions rests on the wide range of jurisdictions with existing mechanisms which he reviewed: Australia, Colombia, France, Hong Kong, Ireland, The Netherlands, The Philippines, United Kingdom, and the United States.

- strengthening program offerings by preventing unnecessary overlap and duplication, thereby ensuring more effective allocation of available resources.⁶¹¹

The policies, structures and procedures for program review in Ontario are much less bureaucratic and financially detailed than is commonly the case in U.S. state systems. This appears to be largely due to the greater emphasis in most states on formal structures for system-level governance and coordination and their related authority over master planning, and practices that relate program review to detailed budgeting and institutional finance.

The term "planning" is used to describe a variety of activities related to methods of establishing and achieving specific objectives. Academic program review refers to decisions relating to the substantive development of higher education.⁶¹² It is a type of planning activity which ultimately shapes the development of higher education in an attempt to achieve the best use of scarce resources to achieve social objectives. Program review typically includes a quality control component aimed at consumer protection and ongoing qualitative improvement, takes account of budgetary/fiscal factors, assesses the degree and justifiability of existing program duplication, and evaluates the need for a program and its appropriateness in an institutional and system context.

5.3 Ontario Universities to the 1960s: An Emerging Emphasis on Academic Coordination and Planning

Prior to World War II, all existing universities offered graduate work to the M.A. Only the University of Toronto offered programs leading to the Ph.D. in some fields.⁶¹³ There was

611. Lyman A. Glenny, *Autonomy of Public Colleges: The Challenge of Coordination*, New York: McGraw Hill, 1959, pp. 204-205.

612. Robert Berdahl, *Statewide Coordination...*, *op cit.*, p. 135.

613. Committee of Presidents of Provincially Assisted Universities and Colleges of Ontario, *The Structure of Post-Secondary Education in Ontario*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, June 1963, p. 10.

little tradition of coordination among universities prior to World War II, and graduate program planning in Ontario was the sole responsibility and prerogative of the individual institutions. In spite of the rapid post-war increase in the number of universities, coordination and interinstitutional cooperation was extremely limited. In fact, the only history of liaison among the universities concerned matriculation standards for undergraduate entry. The Ontario Matriculation Board, organized in 1909 by Toronto, Queen's, McMaster and Western, controlled the pass and honour matriculation examinations. The Matriculation Conference made recommendations to university senates and to the Department of Education with respect to text-books, relationships with private schools and a variety of other matters. This body "had an effective and influential existence from 1910 to 1951."⁶¹⁴ Notwithstanding matters of matriculation, there was little contact among the universities, and no formal coordination of programs province-wide.

The five publicly assisted universities of 1939 had become fifteen by 1963.⁶¹⁵ The development of professional and graduate programs in the post-war period was extensive. Between 1939 and 1963 the universities added eight new engineering schools, four new law schools, and significantly expanded programs in business administration, physical and health education, social work and other professional and semi-professional fields. Graduate work was expanding and the pace of growth accelerated with the introduction of government financial support for graduate studies in 1963-64.⁶¹⁶

614. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

615. In 1939 total enrolment in the five universities was about 11,000 full-time students, of whom 7,000 were enrolled at the University of Toronto.

616. Committee of Presidents of Provincially Assisted Universities and Colleges of Ontario, *The Structure of Post-Secondary Education ...*, *op cit.*, p. 16.

Chapter 5: Coordination and Planning in Ontario: A Focus on Graduate Programming

The establishment of the Committee of Presidents in 1962, signalled that individual institutions recognized the need for cooperative approaches to matters concerning Ontario university education as a whole. The Committee of Presidents established a number of advisory committees in the early years, including an Advisory Committee on Graduate Studies in 1964, to provide themselves with advice on the development of the graduate enterprise. In recognition of the government's interest in ensuring efficient use of the sharply increasing public grants to universities, one of the university sector's highest priorities was to demonstrate coordination in the development of graduate studies due to the appreciably higher costs associated with teaching and research at that level.

Confronted with the dual problems of explosive enrolments and capital expansion, and the accompanying increase in need for public funds, each university planning and developing in accordance with its own particular needs was no longer practical. Yet, the apparently inexhaustible market for higher degree graduates in Ontario and in Canada, the general desire for all universities in Ontario to proceed as quickly as possible to master's programs, and the widespread desire among academics everywhere to introduce the doctoral degree, created intense competition between Ontario universities for funds and government favour to enhance the probability of achieving their individual graduate programming ambitions.

In the spring of 1965, the Executive Committee of the Committee of Presidents approached the Committee on University Affairs (the precursor to the Ontario Council on University Affairs) about joint sponsorship of a commission to examine post-graduate education in Ontario. Such a commission was appointed in the summer of 1965 with J.W.T. Spinks, President of the University of Saskatchewan as Chair. For an overview of the recommendations flowing from the 1966 *Report of the Commission to Study the Development*

Chapter 5: Coordination and Planning in Ontario: A Focus on Graduate Programming of Graduate Programmes in Ontario Universities see the discussion of the “Spinks Commission” in Chapter 3.

While the Spinks Commission was undertaking its research, then Minister of Education and Minister of University Affairs, William G. Davis, publicly presented his views with respect to “what the appropriate relationship should be between the government and the universities of this province...”⁶¹⁷ and endeavoured to set forth in specific terms “not only what the responsibilities of government should be, but what role the universities might be fairly asked to assume.”⁶¹⁸ Davis asserted that academic freedom and university autonomy, while valued in a democratic society, were not necessarily synonymous. Further, he pointed out that university autonomy within a democracy was desirable

only if the universities themselves are able and willing to assume the high degree of responsibility that goes with it...[which] involves a recognition of the total needs of society, a realization of the manner in which universities can serve those needs, and an undertaking of the action necessary to see that they are carried out. ...Such responsibility involves an awareness that the ambitions and desires of a given institution, faculty, or department within a university may have to be tempered by the over-all requirements of society. It demands greater co-operation and co-ordination among universities than we have ever known before.⁶¹⁹

However, should the universities fail to demonstrate that they could not or would not accept their responsibilities to act in the public interest, for example, by failing to provide accessibility, failing to offer programs for which there was pressing societal demand, and failing to avoid unwarranted program duplication, Davis indicated that he could not “imagine that any society, especially one bearing large expense for higher education, will want to stand

617. William G. Davis, “The Government of Ontario and the Universities of the Province”, *Governments and the University: The Frank Gerstein Lectures, 1966*, Toronto: Macmillan, 1966, p. 23.

618. *Ibid.*

619. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

idly by.”⁶²⁰ He concluded that under such circumstances “...there will inevitably be a demand...that government move in and take over..”⁶²¹ and noted that: “ In saying this I am not attempting to act as an alarmist or to use alarmist tactics, but it is important to realize what the possibilities are.”⁶²²

Looking back over the impact of that lecture, William G. Davis believes that while the lecture made his views known in a very public way

...it really reflected what I had been saying on behalf of the government quietly to the universities without making major speeches on the subject. I developed a great affection for and understanding of the need for academic independence and autonomy but at the same time, I was attempting to remind the universities that they could not isolate themselves from the community as a whole, and if they didn't accept that they had some responsibility in this regard, that a vacuum would be created and government would start making decisions for them. ...I think there was an acceptance by the universities of that reality and I think that that has held true to the present day.⁶²³

The Spinks report underlined the need for a redefinition of the balance between university freedom and government direction, and for coordination and cooperation among the universities to avoid the inefficient use of public funds. The Commission argued that if the universities would surrender the degree of autonomy necessary to eliminate unrestricted competition for new programs and “ill-advised expansion” they could create an educational establishment in Ontario that would be of the highest quality while demonstrating efficient use of public resources. The proposed University of Ontario structure based on the State university model adopted in New York and California, and the associated reforms in university governance required to achieve the Spinks vision (such as a single university president

620. *Ibid.*

621. *Ibid.*

622. *Ibid.*

623. Interview with William G. Davis, April 16, 1997.

presiding over a Board of Regents and a comprehensive academic senate) ran head-long into significant public support for the distinctive “personalities” of each Ontario university and an unwillingness among universities to restrict their own potential for academic development.

The Spinks Commission also raised the spectre of role differentiation among universities with respect to programming and Ontario universities reacted in a divided fashion. The established institutions argued that the financial, material and human resources required for the expansion of the graduate enterprise in Ontario made it mandatory that graduate work be restricted to a few of the larger universities. The newer, less academically developed institutions counter-argued that they must immediately embark on the road to graduate programming in order to attract the faculty required to operate a high-quality educational institution and enhance their institutional prestige.⁶²⁴ This underlying tension, which had provoked the universities to approach government to co-sponsor the Commission in the first place, had only been exacerbated as a result of the report.

5.3.1 *From Reaction to Action: The Universities’ Response*

Through voluntary and collective action, the universities quickly took up the planning challenge. Having referred the relevant sections of the Spinks report to the Advisory Committee on Graduate Studies⁶²⁵ for further study, the Committee of Presidents received two recommendations. The first envisaged the establishment of a process to review graduate program quality and the second envisaged “consultation within individual disciplines and

624. J.W.T. Spinks, *et al.*, *Report to the Committee on University Affairs and the Committee of Presidents of Provincially-assisted Universities of the Commission to Study the Development of Graduate Programmes in Ontario Universities*, Toronto: The Commission, November 1966, p. 42.

625. Chaired by Ernest Sirluck, Dean of Graduate Studies, University of Toronto.

professions with a view to working out a division of responsibility for particular aspects of graduate study and research".⁶²⁶

The presidents responded positively to such recommendations. In December 1966, the Advisory Committee on Graduate Studies was transformed into the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies (OCGS). OCGS was charged with advising the university presidents on the orderly development of graduate education and research based on province-wide inter-university consultation to achieve a division of responsibility for specific fields of graduate work and research among the universities and to introduce a system for appraisal of the academic adequacy of proposed new graduate degree programs. Its terms of reference had a decidedly planning orientation:

To promote the advancement of graduate education and research in the provincially assisted universities in Ontario; to consider matters referred to it by the Committee of Presidents; to advise the Committee of Presidents on the planning and development of an orderly pattern of graduate education and research, having regard, among other things, to the need to avoid unnecessary duplication of programmes and facilities.⁶²⁷

OCGS established an academic quality appraisal process in 1967 to which all new graduate programs would be subjected under the aegis of an Appraisals Committee. The universities agreed among themselves to submit all new graduate programs to appraisal before submitting them to their own senates for final approval and implementation, and not to implement programs which were unfavourably appraised.⁶²⁸ While existing graduate program quality was also to be appraised, this would occur on a selective basis, initially, at the request of the

626. Committee of Presidents of Universities of Ontario, *System Emerging: First Annual Review*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967, p. 14.

627. "Ontario Council on Graduate Studies," p. 2, quoted in W.G. Fleming, *op cit.*, p. 45.

628. Ordering the process in this way preserved symbolically the autonomy of Senate decisions.

institution, and later systematically, according to a discipline-specific rotation. Appraisals would be undertaken by external consultants acceptable both to the university and to the Council on Graduate Studies.⁶²⁹

Criteria for academic program review used by system planning and coordinating agencies in the United States typically include the intrinsic merit of new programs, societal need, faculty qualifications, centrality of the program to institutional mission and an examination of unit costs. The OCGS process examines program quality, including quality of curriculum, resources and faculty, but does not include a review of societal need, cost, and centrality to institutional mission. It also focuses solely upon graduate programs and hence, lacks an academically comprehensive perspective.

Lynn Watt, a former Executive Director of the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies concluded "...OCGS was born in the expectation that the universities could work together harmoniously in the development of graduate studies and by so doing forestall government intervention."⁶³⁰ One might also argue that, in view of the "Davis threat" of government intervention, if collective system planning and coordination failed to transpire, universities had strategically focused on and limited their efforts (and government's concern) to the graduate level, which in 1966 effectively constituted just over 11% of total full-time university enrolment.⁶³¹

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629. Discussion of the OCGS graduate program quality appraisals process is discussed here in cursory terms as two studies on the subject of appraisals have been recently undertaken. These are Ellen Herbeson, *The Ontario Council on Graduate Studies Appraisals Process: A Case Study*, Doctor of Philosophy Thesis, University of Toronto, 1994 and Carolyn Filteau, *Evaluating the Evaluators: A Description of the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies Appraisals Process*, A project submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Public Administration in the Faculty of Graduate Studies, Queen's University, August 1, 1991.
630. L.A.K. Watt, "Graduate Studies and Planning in Ontario - The Role of OCGS: 1967 - 1987", 1987, Unpublished paper, p. 1.
631. Data obtained from the Commission on Post-Secondary Education in Ontario, *Draft Report*, Toronto: Queen's Printer, 1971, Table D-11, p. 99. Table D-11 indicates that in 1966-67 full-time university graduate enrolment totaled 7,410 students, while full-time undergraduate enrolment totaled 55,441.

Chapter 5: Coordination and Planning in Ontario: A Focus on Graduate Programming

Despite its narrow emphasis relative to American jurisdictions where the undergraduate enterprise was the focus of quality and accountability concerns, universities quickly found the OCGS appraisal process somewhat constraining. It moved quickly to amend its new by-laws in order to allow the Appraisals Committee to recommend granting approval for a program to commence at a specified future date in cases where the required criteria could not be met immediately. As was noted in the Presidents' annual report of 1968:

Even with this modification there is bound to be some disappointment on the part of university departments which must postpone their desire to offer new programmes of graduate study. The appraisals procedure does appear to require some sacrifice on the part of the cooperating institutions.⁶³²

In 1969, the watering down of the process continued in order to sustain collective support for the endeavour. Modifications were made to the process in order that decisions to "not-approve", "suspend approval" or "approve at a future date" would be communicated to the university concerned with a statement of the reasons for such a recommendation to which the university in question could submit a statement of rebuttal, and request new consultants to reexamine the proposal. In addition, a university could request a subsequent appraisal for a program which had been negatively appraised. The submission would then be treated as if the earlier appraisal had not been carried out.⁶³³

The introduction of an appraisals process was strongly supported by the Committee on University Affairs in its 1967 report:

This system provides the first and perhaps most critical test for a graduate program - academic quality. The structure of the system and the use of external

632. Committee of Presidents of Universities of Ontario, *Collective Autonomy: Second Annual Review 1967/68*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968, p. 2.

633. See Committee of Presidents of Universities of Ontario, *Campus and Forum: Third Annual Review, 1968-69*, Oshawa: Maracle Press, 1969 for a detailed description of the process at that time.

judges seems to provide for the utmost objectivity and fairness.⁶³⁴

At the same time, the Committee stressed that a satisfactory appraisal in itself was not sufficient for the approval of new programs and that "[t]ests of need must also be applied."⁶³⁵

The Committee also identified the need for "effective rationalization of effort and resource allocation" and "more effective communication among the universities and with the Committee on University Affairs". In short, the committee wanted more planning but they wanted the universities to do it. Too much central control in this regard, however, was identified as a possible threat to the system and to the principle of autonomy. The Committee cautioned:

In encouraging the development of graduate work in Ontario it is imperative that programs of such cost and importance be of high quality and carefully planned. Rapid but controlled growth, reasonable enough as a concept, presents certain challenges to traditional patterns of interaction and to fundamental notions of university autonomy.⁶³⁶

While encouraging collective autonomy as the preferred approach to academic planning of the graduate enterprise, the government used its spending power to achieve its objectives related to quality assurance. As of 1968-69, the government decided that it would not fund new graduate programs unless they had received a favourable appraisal from OCGS. The government very effectively buttressed the appraisals process by linking public support for graduate programs to collective attestations of program quality.⁶³⁷

634. Committee on University Affairs, *Report of the Committee on University Affairs 1967*, p. 24.

635. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

636. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

637. Department of University Affairs, *A Report on the Counting of Graduate Students Under the Ontario Formula for Operating Grants*, October 7, 1969, p. 2 and Committee on University Affairs, *Report of the Committee of University Affairs 1967*, Toronto: Queen's Printer, 1967, p. 24.

5.3.2 *Grasping the Nettle: Graduate Program Planning and the Advisory Committee on Academic Planning*

The appraisals process was based solely on considerations of academic quality. To address OCGS's mandate for province-wide inter-university consultation within individual disciplines and professions at the departmental level, in May 1968, a meeting of about 450 representatives of various disciplines from every Ontario university was convened by the Committee of Presidents (COP) to explore ways in which interuniversity cooperation in graduate studies could be achieved. The primary goal was to find a way to avoid unnecessary program duplication. In his opening address, the Chairman of the COP, J.A. Corry, argued that if the Ontario universities were to make optimum use of their scarce resources in this very expensive area, this "may well be the most important business the universities of Ontario have yet attempted together".⁶³⁸ Corry used his address to summarize the choices and responsibilities facing Ontario universities in the area of graduate program planning. His address so clearly evokes the nature of the crossroads universities faced at that time, it bears repeating at length:

We have known for some time that the days of laissez-faire in university education in Ontario are over. We have accepted this ... and set about building a voluntary system in which we submit our graduate programmes to outside appraisal. ... In only one area - the coordination of graduate studies - have we shrunk from grasping the nettle and weeding out any unnecessary and costly duplication, actual or potential, in graduate programmes. ...

The urgent reasons for cooperation in the field of graduate studies are not far to seek. An obvious one is that if the universities don't get together and do the job themselves the Government will step in and do it for them... I do not

638. J.A. Corry, Chair of the Committee of Presidents of Ontario Universities and Principal of Queen's University, "General Meeting of Discipline Groups, May 11, 1968, Opening Address by Dr. J.A. Corry", Appendix D of Committee of Presidents of Universities of Ontario, *Collective Autonomy: Second Annual Review 1967/68*, Toronto: The Committee, 1968, p. 62.

regard this... as a threat to university autonomy. Rather, I take it as an expression of the inevitable consequence of our failure to order our affairs in a reasonable way. ...

I wish I could say that the process of cooperation in the field of graduate studies will be a painless one, but I would be less than frank if I pretended that this was so. All the universities will have to pass self-denying ordinances and curb their aspirations in some directions. The older and more mature universities can take comfort that by and large cooperation will not require them to give up programmes of graduate studies already flourishing. Yet it will not do for them to say grimly, "Whatever we have we hold." They will have to remember that cooperation and coordination cannot be wholly at the expense of the newer and the smaller. To prevent that, the older and more mature will have to consider retraction in some fields of minimal commitment. If voluntary coordination is to work there will have to be some sacrificing of interests and ambitions all around.⁶³⁹

Apropos of Corry's warning, the potential for government intervention was clearly influential in enhancing the attractiveness of collective autonomy, even though it effectively reduced institutional autonomy - something the universities resisted on a political and practical level. The discipline groups assembled for the occasion were composed of departmental chairmen or their representative from each university with an interest in graduate work. OCGS introduced the Advisory Committee on Academic Planning (ACAP) in 1968 to guide the development of these provincial discipline groups, coordinate the work of rationalizing graduate studies in the province, and facilitate the development of province-wide coordination within and between them.

ACAP was composed of a minimum of seven members, and in practice there were ten, appointed as individuals rather than as institutional representatives. Members were drawn from the professorial ranks of the Ontario universities with a balance among institutions and discipline areas represented. The discipline groups themselves were composed of one

639. *Ibid.*, pp. 62-63.

representative from each university, appointed by the president. Chosen academics were typically actively engaged in the relevant graduate program and were knowledgeable about the undergraduate enterprise.

In its initial years, ACAP did not undertake any direct planning initiatives and did not have the unanimous support of the university community. Smaller universities were particularly apprehensive about their role in the graduate enterprise, particularly since in March of 1968, the Committee on University Affairs (CUA) had recommended that graduate work in emergent universities be confined in the period of emergence to master's programs in areas specified by the appraisals process. The CUA also expected emergent institutions and established universities to work together in offering graduate studies in a consortia format. While the Committee of Presidents never endorsed the idea that emergent universities should be confined exclusively to master's programs, its support for sharing and cooperation at the graduate level was viewed as implicit support of the Committee on University Affairs position by the emerging universities.⁶⁴⁰ Faculty, represented by the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations, argued that the proposed planning activities would interfere with the prerogatives of university Senates.

By February 1969, 28 discipline groups had submitted progress reports to the Advisory Committee on Academic Planning with respect to graduate program cooperation. One of ACAP's mandates was to provide the system perspective typically lacking within the particular discipline reports which often displayed diverging views on how their discipline's review should be handled. While some discipline groups took the responsibility seriously and

640. Committee of Presidents of Universities of Ontario, *Collective Autonomy: Second Annual Review 1967/68*. Toronto: The Committee, 1968, p. 14.

surveyed graduate programs throughout the province on a systematic basis, after two years it became clear institutional self-interest was influencing the judgments of the department chairs in practically all disciplines. The ensuing reports were uneven in nature and appeared to gloss over issues of duplication in some discipline areas, reflecting the strategic and rational desire of Chairs to maximize their range of opportunities for academic development in the future. ACAP reviewed the reports and, in an effort to guide and assist the discipline groups, drew up guidelines for a standardized inventory of each discipline. Acting on the information submitted to it, ACAP was successful in preventing the overexpansion of capital expenditures in geology in 1969.

In 1970, the university senates were asked to consider proposals for a more formalized role for ACAP. Interestingly, the universities were prepared to consider graduate program planning responsibilities for a more formalized ACAP but rejected an undergraduate role for it:

As the various universities reported, it became evident that the overwhelming majority favoured the establishment of such a committee, but only if its activities were directed specifically to planning at the graduate level. Undergraduate matters were to be considered only in so far as they might impose conditions and constraints on proposals for rationalization of graduate study.⁶⁴¹

The undergraduate academic core of the universities had once again dodged the coordination and planning bullet.

Despite system efforts at the graduate level, government dissatisfaction over the rate of voluntary progress toward rationalization, ongoing graduate enrolment growth and a

641. Council of Ontario Universities, *Fifth Annual Review, 1970-71: Participatory Planning*, Toronto: T.H. Best Printing, 1971, p. 22.

concern over the number of non-Canadians enrolled as students in graduate programs prompted the imposition of a funding moratorium on graduate programs which served to reemphasize the need for swift and decisive response by the universities to the government's expectation of rational program development.

5.4 Restricting and Rationalizing Growth: 1971 to 1976

During the early 1970s, graduate enrolment continued to grow in an explosive fashion, having jumped from roughly 7,500 in 1966-67 to 17,000 full-time equivalent students in 1970-71, raising concern over the rapidly rising associated costs. In 1971, the Provincial government introduced new initiatives in reaction to indications that graduate enrolment would continue to grow. Realizing that within the existing, enrolment-sensitive funding arrangements significant growth would prove very costly to the Province and would place an unbearable and unjustifiable financial burden on the tax-payer, government introduced a moratorium on the funding of all graduate programs. The establishment of financial mechanisms to avoid future problems suggests that at this point the government was once again using its spending power to induce a measure of planning.

The imposition of the 1971 funding "embargo" on graduate programs to restrict and rationalize further graduate program growth meant that universities would not receive funding for any new graduate programs even if they had passed appraisal. This action was unacceptable to the universities, which moved quickly to enter into discussions with the government's advisory body, the Committee on University Affairs, on ways to circumvent the embargo.

As a result of the negotiations, and the work of a joint subcommittee of CUA and COU, the universities agreed to expand the role of ACAP to include discipline planning

assessments undertaken by independent consultants that would become part of a provincial development plan that the universities would agree to respect in order to achieve the government's objective of rationalizing the development of graduate programs. The Ministry's acceptance of the Council of Ontario Universities' (COU)⁶⁴² approved ACAP plan was the pre-requisite to lifting the embargo against a given discipline. Further, proposed revisions to the universities' individual development plans were to be reviewed annually by ACAP, then approved by COU and reviewed again by CUA and the Ministry. The collective impact of the institutional plans on each discipline would be assessed and served as the basis for an annual review of the embargo list.

At COU's request, OCGS prepared a by-law establishing a new format for ACAP whereby ACAP, although an OCGS committee, reported directly to COU on the results of what would become known as "planning assessments" containing proposals for the orderly development of specific disciplines, and which allowed for ACAP's interaction with the range of COU affiliates. ACAP was to report through OCGS on matters of general policy.

ACAP's new mandate was six-fold:

1. To advise OCGS on steps to be taken to implement effective provincial planning of graduate development.
2. To promote the rationalization of graduate studies within the universities, in cooperation with the discipline groups
3. To recommend, through OCGS, to COU the carrying out of planning assessments of disciplines or groups of disciplines and to recommend suitable arrangements and procedures for each assessment.
4. To supervise the conduct of each planning assessment approved by COU.
5. To respond to requests by COU to have a discipline assessment conducted by proposing suitable arrangements.
6. To submit to COU the reports of the assessments together with any recommendations

642. Effective May 1, 1971, the Committee of Presidents of Universities of Ontario changed its name to the Council of Ontario Universities.

which the committee wished to make.⁶⁴³

In its new role, ACAP had two main responsibilities: to plan and organize expert assessment of the competence and future potential for graduate work in various disciplines at various institutions and to make estimates of the market for the holders of advanced degrees in various disciplines over a period of years in order to guide the number of students accepted into graduate study in a given field. In essence, ACAP would decide “who does what at the graduate level in the Province and how much of it.”⁶⁴⁴

Procedurally, ACAP oversaw the work of discipline groups, still composed along departmental lines, including departmental chairmen and a representative of each university involved in offering the program. The discipline groups gathered detailed information according to a template against which every department and every discipline was to be reviewed. They were required to identify the fields and sub-fields in each discipline. This information provided ACAP with a preliminary review of the strengths and weaknesses of each department operating in the discipline. Each university then prepared a detailed submission in which it identified its future plans for graduate development in the discipline. ACAP subsequently organized a planning assessment, undertaken by independent and neutral internationally recognized experts from outside Ontario who travelled as a group, visiting each university department. These independent planning assessments identified departmental strengths and weaknesses, and areas requiring expansion and retrenchment.

As a former Executive Director of OCGS, Lynn Watt, observed there was also an implicit quality control expectation of ACAP in addition to the planning function. In his view:

643. Ontario Council on Graduate Studies, *By-Law No. 3*, January 1971.

644. Interview with Maurice Yeates, April 15, 1997.

While ACAP was not charged with assessing academic quality per se, it was expected to identify any programs where the quality of the graduate offering might be suspect and recommend that those programs be submitted for appraisal.⁶⁴⁵

Flowing from ACAP's reviews, several programs were required to undergo the so called "consequent appraisal" process.

The enhanced and activist phase of ACAP's existence was inextricably linked to the outlook of the new Executive Vice-Chairman of OCGS, Mel Preston, a former Professor of Physics and of Applied Mathematics and Dean of Graduate Studies at McMaster University, who had been brought in to implement the new ACAP planning process. Preston firmly believed in the normative, goal-oriented approach that formed the foundation of the ACAP planning process and he pursued it with "messianic vigour" and "ruthless" intensity.⁶⁴⁶ As a former Chair of the Geography discipline group recalled, faculty were taken aback by the intensity of Preston's approach:

[Mel Preston] was told to implement this ACAP process by the Presidents. One reason why it eventually fell apart was that Mel Preston actually did it. That was the nerve of the guy - he actually implemented it! ...I don't know whether he realized that he wasn't suppose to really be that strong and vigorous about it but he did actually do it...Some people definitely looked at Mel Preston as an ogre because he was implementing it.⁶⁴⁷

During this period, OCGS was dominated by Graduate Deans from the science disciplines, particularly Chemistry. Preston's approach to ACAP was strongly supported by many of the Deans with a science background, much more so than by the Deans from non-science disciplines who were less inclined to support the results of ACAP's quantification of

645. L.A.K. Watt, "Graduate Studies and Planning in Ontario - The role of OCGS: 1967-1987". 1987, Unpublished paper, p. 3.

646. Interview with Maurice Yeates, April 15, 1997.

647. *Ibid.*

their programs. Certain graduate Deans who were committed to the ACAP process, viewed ACAP as an instrument with which to protect their own institutional interests in graduate programming by limiting competition and controlling the growth of additional programs at other universities.⁶⁴⁸

In the dynamic environment created under the firm direction of Mel Preston, ACAP produced 20 discipline planning assessment reports between 1971 and 1977, and eight smaller studies, all funded by the universities. These reports included recommendations that existing programs be allowed to continue; be limited to a specific area of specialization within the discipline; or be discontinued. Some recommendations called for the commencement of needed or justifiable new programmes, others called for the suspension or curtailment of existing programs. Still others recommended enhancing program quality or directed programs to the OCGS quality appraisals process.

ACAP recommendations were first reviewed by the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies, then COU, which issued its own report representing the collective opinion of the Ontario universities as to the type of graduate development desired in the subject within each university department in the province. This report was submitted to the government's intermediary committee CUA and once approved, became an official development plan for the discipline. The universities agreed to be bound by these COU/ACAP recommendations. The government agreed to lift the embargo on funding new programs in an embargoed discipline once the ACAP discipline plan had been approved by COU and reviewed by CUA. CUA also recommended new programs for funding that had been deemed by ACAP to be consistent with

648. *Ibid.*

Chapter 5: Coordination and Planning in Ontario: A Focus on Graduate Programming

the provisions of the COU and CUA approved plan, and had passed the OCGS quality appraisal process.

At this stage, the government's criteria for new graduate program funding approval were: a) that the program be in an unembargoed discipline; b) that it have received a successful quality appraisal; and c) that it be in accordance with the approved institutional three or five-year academic plan.

Throughout the spring of 1971 universities were able to appeal the government's funding embargo if they wished to offer a graduate program which they considered to be of unusual importance or of a unique character. ACAP was required to recommend on each program which was forwarded to the Committee on University Affairs for consideration. Due to a lack of system data and no master plan against which to make judgments based on the need for a program, the views of ACAP and CUA were often in conflict. Eventually, as a result of ACAP's work and COU negotiations, in which COU had argued that a universal embargo was too "blunt an instrument" since some disciplines in fact needed encouragement to grow, the comprehensive funding embargo was reduced in 1972 to roughly 20 disciplines in which the danger of over-expansion was considered to be acute. In these disciplines, no new programs were permitted except at the master's level at the "emergent" universities (Brock, Lakehead, Laurentian, Trent, and later Wilfrid Laurier). The "emergent" institutions were permitted new programs in embargoed disciplines provided that they formed part of an approved five-year plan and did not include doctoral programs. This restriction on doctoral program development at "emergent" institutions was not lifted by the government until 1989. All other universities, beginning in 1972-73, were required to submit three-year plans to COU, providing the system with advance indication of new graduate program development. All

subsequent appeals of the embargo went directly from the institution concerned to CUA.

As a result of the ACAP planning assessments, universities were required to re-examine programs that had been in existence for a number of years and to develop comprehensive forward plans for the development of graduate work - an exercise few institutions had previously undertaken. ACAP assessments led to some programs being sharply curtailed, although few were closed, even though it was widely recognized that many doctoral programs were of sub-optimal size.⁶⁴⁹ The process itself stimulated inter-university co-operation among discipline groups and resulted in stronger programs in a number of areas.⁶⁵⁰ It placed COU in the position of monitoring implementation of the Ministry approved plans.

In COU's 1972 response to the *COPSEO Draft Report*, the work of ACAP was held up as an alternative to the prospect of the establishment of a powerful provincial coordinating board:

COU through its Advisory Committee on Academic Planning is involved currently in studying the needs in 15 graduate disciplines. To perform this task well it has found it necessary to involve some 200 faculty members in design of the studies and assembly of data in the universities as well as some 60 independent consultants to provide advice. This cooperation has been mounted by the universities to accomplish a task which must be done. It represents the price of genuine planning. It is depressing to think of this responsibility being shifted to a government appointed Board, external to the universities, being served by a large civil service staff far removed geographically, academically and spiritually from the realities of each university and each community.⁶⁵¹

The development of an appraisals process for graduate programs under the authority

649. Council of Ontario Universities, *Review 1972-73 to 1974-75: New Structure New Environment*, Toronto: The Council, 1976, p. 19.

650. L.A.K. Watt, "Graduate Studies and Planning in Ontario, The Role of OCGS : 1967 - 1987". Unpublished paper, 1987, p. 4.

651. Council of Ontario Universities, *Responses to the Draft Report of the Commission on Post-secondary Education in Ontario*, Toronto: COU, May 1972, p. 14.

Chapter 5: Coordination and Planning in Ontario: A Focus on Graduate Programming

of the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies and a planning component, provided by the Advisory Committee on Academic Planning's discipline assessments, were, in large part, government induced alternatives to the structures recommended by the Spinks Commission. These collective initiatives satisfied the government's desire for an Ontario standard of acceptable program quality and the avoidance of duplication in the area of graduate programming. By adopting these measures as a collectivity, the universities were able to stave off the threat of direct government intervention in graduate program planning and development. The OCGS quality appraisals process also addressed a genuine concern among graduate deans that the explosive growth in graduate programs which was occurring in the 1960s would lead to a deterioration in the quality of the graduate enterprise in the province unless some form of quality control were established that applied to all institutions.⁶⁵² By surrendering a degree of their traditional institutional independence, the introduction of planning and coordination in the expansion of the graduate enterprise, the improvement of academic quality, and the elimination of unjustifiable duplication were achieved by the universities acting as a collectivity.

5.4.1 *Fiscal Constraint and Financial Imperatives*

By the mid-seventies, economic uncertainty engendered by high inflation rates, high unemployment and the world oil crisis had placed a damper on the enthusiasm for public expenditures in Ontario.⁶⁵³ In 1975, the government's new advisory body, the Ontario Council

652. Written observations of Lynn Watt, June 1997.

653. Ontario Council on University Affairs, "Advisory Memorandum 75-IV, Graduate Program Planning", *Second Annual Report 1975-76*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, 1976, p. 27.

Chapter 5: Coordination and Planning in Ontario: A Focus on Graduate Programming

on University Affairs (OCUA), indicated to the university presidents that while the quality assurance and planning accomplishments to date had been commendable, consideration of the financial implications of graduate planning had been notable in their absence from the system's planning decisions. With resources becoming increasingly scarce, OCUA announced its desire to discuss the effectiveness of ACAP, and explore other potential means of graduate program rationalization to ensure the viability of high quality graduate programs in a period of fiscal stringency.⁶⁵⁴

OCUA decided to review COU recommendations on the development of graduate programs only once a year as a package, and required COU to include an examination of the financial consequences of their recommendations. The Minister subsequently decided that funding for new programs in assessed disciplines would be deferred pending a recommendation from OCUA on the financial implications of implementation. In addition, COU's recommendation for the funding of new programs would not simply be passed on to government by the government's advisory body without explanation. Henceforth, OCUA committed to making its recommendations to government in the context of discursive advisory memoranda "in which the public interest in the balance between fiscal resources and qualitative standards"⁶⁵⁵ would be articulated.

5.4.2 *Growing Dissatisfaction with ACAP*

Despite consensus among universities about the value of planning, the ACAP process was widely criticized for the amount of time, manpower and expense it involved and for its

654. *Ibid.*

655. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

administrative cumbersomeness. The universities noted that the discipline assessments were highly uneven in quality as was the emphasis that different teams of consultants accorded to each element of their terms of reference. The reports were also criticized for being monotonous in their recommendations for university co-operation rather than stressing intra-university strength or weakness.⁶⁵⁶ In particular, the universities were unhappy with the way ACAP consultants were handling the issue of quality. In the preface to its final report, ACAP detailed these concerns as follows:

One of the primary concerns throughout these assessments was to ensure that all graduate programmes in the disciplines were of high quality. Accordingly, the COU report in some cases identified programmes for which there was some reason to question the quality and called for those programmes to receive a favourable appraisal from the Appraisals Committee of the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies by a certain date or cease enrolling students. While this approach worked well in some cases, the unevenness of the ACAP consultants' reports on which the recommendations for appraisals were based, was a major weakness and resulted in uneven treatment across disciplines.⁶⁵⁷

By 1975, ACAP had completed 20 reports. However, it was the shared view of the Minister of Colleges and Universities and OCUA that ACAP assessments were not resulting in any significant degree of graduate program rationalization. Both had expected a successful system of planning assessments to result in the closure of a number of programs and the consolidation of those which remained.

In a letter to OCUA, the Minister noted that the universities had achieved

...solid accomplishments in terms of self-evaluation, inter-university co-operation and the development of common high standards for graduate work, with which I fully agree... At the same time, now that the results are largely in, it is apparent that in numerical terms the process is not adequately rationalizing

656. *Ibid.*, p. 28.

657. Council of Ontario Universities, Advisory Committee on Academic Planning, *Perspectives and Plans for Graduate Studies: 21. Social Work 1984*, Toronto: The Council, "Forward".

graduate programs. This is disappointing in terms of Ministry objectives and expectations...

By now all universities should be aware that the Provincial Government faces a financial future which allows for little or no expansion and indeed requires difficult decisions and trade-offs between various academic goals and activities. As the third largest recipient of funding from the Provincial Government, universities must recognize this reality in their internal planning.

I am hopeful, therefore, that the universities can use the information and experience acquired through ACAP to make the collective decisions necessary to produce more rational graduate plans.... If the public interest is to be served, the result of the planning process should be a spectrum of programs of the highest quality accomplished within the limits of the Province's resources. Universities may have to identify particular segments of graduate work in which they excel so that institutional strengths can be co-ordinated into a collectively strong system.⁶⁵⁸

5.5 Protecting the Investment - Formula Suspension: 1976 to 1979

By late 1975, the government felt that new planning objectives were required for a variety of reasons. First, external factors had altered the university environment considerably since 1971. Graduate enrolment levels had stabilized at far below the projected levels (just over 16,000 actual full-time enrolments, as opposed to 24,204 graduate students projected by the Spinks Commission) and fiscal restraint on the part of the government since 1970 had discouraged program expansion at the institutions. Second, the universities had clearly failed to achieve the degree of program rationalization and closure which the government desired. The 1975-76 academic year heralded the beginning of a much enhanced and more direct role for government in the area of graduate programming.

Shortly after the establishment of OCUA in 1974, it became clear that the anticipated

658. Letter from the Honourable James A.C. Auld, Minister of Colleges and Universities, to the Ontario Council on University Affairs, July 22, 1975, pp. 2 to 4.

Chapter 5: Coordination and Planning in Ontario: A Focus on Graduate Programming

graduate enrolment increases were not materializing and that planning objectives and structures geared to the orderly accommodation of rapid enrolment growth were no longer appropriate. Since graduate enrolment had stabilized at far below projected levels, emphasis shifted from restricting and rationalizing growth to consolidating and protecting the long-term future and quality of the existing array of graduate programs. Government also sought to ensure that the development of new graduate programs did not occur at the expense of the financial viability of the system as a whole and especially the undergraduate enterprise.

To assist in the achievement of these objectives, OCUA recommended a suspension of the formula for funding graduate programs. The Minister accepted this advice and announced a three-year funding freeze (1976-1979) which completely decoupled the funding of graduate programs from enrolment. The "freeze"

served the dual purpose of affording Council the time in which to make a thorough examination of graduate funding, and providing the universities with the opportunity to assess their priorities and plan graduate work, both at the institutional and system-wide level, without the financial pressures of an enrolment-sensitive funding mechanism.⁶⁵⁹

OCUA believed that the enrolment-driven funding formula, which assigned money to the universities on the basis of weighted program enrolments, was a major obstacle to program closures. By introducing a funding freeze, whereby enrolment growth would not generate additional revenue for the university, and enrolment decline would not result in revenue loss, the government believed that the universities would be encouraged to reduce enrolment in certain programs and close others. Universities recognized this as another test of their collective planning and coordination capabilities, having been

659. Ontario Council on University Affairs, "The Ontario University System: A Statement of Issues", *Fifth Annual Report 1978-79*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, 1978, p. 33.

... left with clear discretion as to the quality and direction of the activity. [Universities] have been given a period of time within which to review and reconsider their plans for graduate work and to implement changes without financial penalty or gain. This is seen as an opportunity to bring strictly academic considerations to bear on the planning process. Planning decisions will be made in a trade-off climate and the universities will have to act accordingly, both individually and collectively. The activities of ACAP and the Appraisals Committee will be even more important and some integration of the two roles may be desirable.⁶⁶⁰

In the result, OCUA's approach proved ineffective. The universities fully expected that once the temporary freeze was over they would be back on an enrolment-sensitive funding formula. From their point of view, a reduction in graduate enrolment would result in future financial penalties, therefore, program closures did not occur. However, the decision to engage in policy-making of this type sent a distinct message to the institutions with regard to the government's more interventionist approach to planning through the use of the government's spending powers. In 1976 COU stated that this particular approach "...has drastically altered various roles in the exercise of graduate programme planning. OCUA and the Ministry have acknowledged that the level and distribution of funding for graduate study is directly under their control."⁶⁶¹

The funding embargo did not further the government's objective of program rationalization. During the period of formula suspension, OCUA revised the graduate component of the funding mechanism. In 1979, graduate program funding was returned to an enrolment sensitive formula, however, with heavily discounted funding. Funds flowed for

660. Council of Ontario Universities, *Council of Ontario Universities Report of the Special Committee on the Financial Implications of Graduate Planning*, Revised Version, March 1976, pp. 4 - 5.

661. *Ibid.*

additional master's enrolments were discounted by 50% and doctoral program funding was discounted by 2/3.⁶⁶²

5.5.1 Role of ACAP During the Freeze

With a five year record of relative stability in graduate program enrolment levels, OCUA's priority with respect to the graduate enterprise shifted from quantity to quality. In response to these concerns, the universities, through COU, modified the role of ACAP to ensure that planning decisions were based on assessments of quality.⁶⁶³ "Planning appraisals" were introduced in 1976, making the cumbersome ACAP process even more cumbersome. Under these new procedures, every program in the discipline under assessment was to be appraised as the first step in the planning exercise and placed in one of five program classifications: international distinction, national distinction, good quality, minor improvements needed or major improvements needed. Once the program quality appraisals were completed, ACAP would appoint a consultant to provide a plan for the development of the discipline, based on the outcome of the appraisals.

The report of the Appraisals Committee on the quality of the programs became an important and public part of the information on which the planning assessment was based. By conducting the quality appraisals before planning decisions were made, this new process would be informed by independent assessments of quality rather than by the suspicions of ACAP members. It would ensure that when rationalization occurred and programs were

662. Ontario Council on University Affairs, "Advisory Memorandum 77-VI, Graduate Program Planning and Funding," *Fourth Annual Report, 1977-78*, pp. 61-62.

663. See Ontario Council on Graduate Studies, *Graduate Planning in Ontario Universities*, May 1976, pp. 24-30 for a detailed description of the nature of the expanded ACAP role.

closed, it would be the identifiably weaker programs that would be dismantled.

In practice, this process was deemed too costly (over \$150,000 per major discipline review in 1979-80), cumbersome, and time-consuming. It created irreconcilable divisiveness within COU, which did not like program comparisons based on quality made public. With planning and quality appraisal combined, the process had become so complex that the 21st and 22nd reports took three years to prepare in draft form.⁶⁶⁴ By 1980 ACAP found itself in a largely reactive role, providing analysis and advice on programs proposed for funding as required by OCUA. OCUA was calling for evidence of the universities' ability to make tough collective decisions about institutional role differentiation and, as noted in the discussion paper of the Special Committee to Review Graduate Planning, ACAP was "not sure that it has the necessary backing from OCGS and COU to be as tough as OCUA might wish." The Special Committee noted further: "There are limitations imposed by the 'political' nature of the two bodies to which ACAP reports."⁶⁶⁵

That the ACAP process had its shortcomings and that it was forcing university presidents into decisions with which they were clearly uncomfortable, is recalled vividly by a former Chair of the Geography Discipline Group, and later Executive Director of OCGS, Maurice Yeates:

...you could use a common template and approach to the sciences, but once you got to English and History it was difficult. Some of the reports were...uneven, particularly [in] the humanities, partially because the ACAP assessors were meeting as a committee. They...travelled around the province as a group, and sometimes the group worked well as a committee and sometimes they didn't.

664. Ontario Council on Graduate Studies, *The Appraisals Process in Ontario*, Toronto: Council of Ontario Universities, October 1996, p. 7.

665. Council of Ontario Universities, Special Committee to Review Graduate Planning, *Discussion Paper*, June 1980, p. 53.

On some occasions one...intellect would dominate over the others and you would get an entirely eccentric report...[about where the discipline should be going]...which bore no resemblance to what was on the ground...some of them would try to ignore as much as they could this business of who was to do what and how much of it, and then you would get other reports that would be quite adamant about who would do what and how much of it. The extreme in that case was Chemistry, which really got at the hearts of OCGS because at least a third or half of the deans were ex-chemists, where...ACAP... said something like "there are six good doctoral programs in the province of Ontario but we only need four of them." Which ones were going to be cut? Of course, people found that very difficult to live with. As the process rolled out it revealed how difficult it was to do that kind of planning. Part of [the process] was modified so you... could address the issue of quality...in the business of who was going to do what and how much of it. And then, finally, getting rid of it altogether because the poor presidents...end[ed] up at COU approving the plans and of course the last thing a president can ever do is vote for a plan that limits his or her own institution. ...it was continuously putting the presidents in a position that they would never, ever want to be in.⁶⁶⁶

The university presidents' analysis of ACAP's role also pointed to the nature of the underlying tensions which ACAP planning appraisals caused:

When the focus turns to the regulation of programmes in terms of criteria other than quality, for example in terms of provincial needs, duplication and institutional emphasis, the assignment to C.O.U. of an authoritative or regulatory role over member institutions raises concerns among member institutions that C.O.U. would become in effect the governing body of a centrally administered University of Ontario. This concern has led some to suggest an independent academic committee with authority to decide upon the establishment or dismantling of programmes in relation to province-wide needs and other such criteria. ... It would have some attraction as a way of overcoming difficulties with the current ACAP process which is seen as limited in effectiveness because the final decisions require endorsement by the member institutions of C.O.U.⁶⁶⁷

COU refused to budge from its role as a cooperative collectivity and become a regulative federation. The "planning appraisals" were discontinued in 1980 by COU after the

666. Interview with Maurice Yeates, April 15, 1997.

667. Committee of Executive Heads of Ontario Universities, "The Situation of Ontario Universities", November 5, 1980, p. 28.

review of only three disciplines had been initiated. The 22nd and final ACAP report, on Social Work, was published in 1983-84. The "planning appraisals" begun in Philosophy and English were never completed although a draft report on Philosophy was publicly circulated.

5.6 Improving the Planning Environment - Quinquennial Plans and Macroindicator Data

By 1977, the Government's advisory body, OCUA, had become even more vocal and involved in the area of graduate planning. Its position was necessitated by its core role as a buffer. As former OCUA Chair, J. Stefan Dupré, recalled:

On one side, politicians were demanding something, anything, that would enable them to say that universities were not self-serving institutions feeding either on the public trough or on each other. On the other side, universities needed exhortation lest they throw up their hands from sheer exhaustion and frustration.⁶⁶⁸

Specifically, OCUA indicated a need for reliable decision-support data on which to base planning decisions. At the time there was no general statistical profile of graduate programs in Ontario, and this, OCUA argued, was essential, with particular priority to be given to doctoral programs. This was arguably the most minimal request with which to begin to address the issue, and a reasonable concession on the universities part, in view of the alternatives that OCUA could have conceived. OCUA requested that COU provide the following five macroindicators for each doctoral program in the Province, discipline by discipline for the years 1974-75 to 1976-77:

1. number of full-time faculty and the number of part-time faculty involved in each program;

668. Observation provided to the author by J. Stefan Dupré, July 1997.

Chapter 5: Coordination and Planning in Ontario: A Focus on Graduate Programming

2. number of full-time students and the number of part-time students registered in each program, from 1970-71 to 1976-77;
3. number of students holding scholarships competitively awarded by agencies external to the university;
4. the dollar level of the peer-adjudicated research grants awarded by national granting agencies to faculty within the program; and
5. the number of doctoral degrees awarded.⁶⁶⁹

OCUA indicated that these macro-indicators were needed to establish a general profile of graduate programs in the Province and to assist in decision-making with respect to future planning.

OCUA had also engaged in consultation with the universities with respect to the desirability of adopting a quinquennial approach to graduate planning as a means of ensuring the orderly development of graduate work in Ontario. OCUA identified what it considered to be the major advantages of a quinquennial approach:

Universities can plan within a fixed time horizon without the feeling that longer-run developments will be frustrated unless all program proposals are put forward at once. Universities can make their objectives more specific in response to the educational and economic environment that prevails within each quinquennium. It is easier and more realistic to set objectives for a five-year period than to discern them for an undefined future.⁶⁷⁰

In 1977, OCUA recommended a comprehensive quinquennial planning process to the Minister which was designed to run from 1979-80 to 1983-84. The Minister accepted this proposal. It was linked to the lifting of the graduate program funding freeze and the introduction of heavily discounted funding for graduate enrolments. The establishment of the quinquennial

669. Ontario Council on University Affairs, *Third Annual Report, 1976 - 77*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, 1977, p. 40.

670. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

planning process, conducted under government (OCUA) scrutiny, marked a significant change in the way in which graduate planning occurred. Government was taking a leadership role in establishing objectives, policies and processes to guide system-wide graduate program development.

5.7 The First Quinquennium, 1979 to 1984: Consolidation

After undertaking extensive consultation with the universities and Ministry officials, OCUA was "...convinced that consolidation must be the theme of the first quinquennial period".⁶⁷¹ This theme was deemed appropriate, given indications that the strictly constrained nature of provincial funding for universities would continue and that graduate enrolment was about to experience a long-term decline in total numbers.⁶⁷²

For the first quinquennium (from 1979-80 to 1983-84) Council enunciated six objectives in 1978 which it believed could be "...directly assimilated into the internal planning and decision-making processes of the universities, and at the same time, would strengthen the program and discipline review processes of the university collectivity".⁶⁷³ The objectives established for the graduate enterprise in the first quinquennium were

1. Recognition and protection of outstanding doctoral programs;
2. Support of good quality graduate programs;
3. Elimination of graduate programs of unsatisfactory quality;

671. Ontario Council on University Affairs, *Fourth Annual Report, 1977-78*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, 1978, p. 55.

672. In fact, full-time graduate enrolment declined steadily by 7% from 1976-77 (16,000 students) to 1979-80 (14,900) and would increase only slowly thereafter.

673. Ontario Council on University Affairs, *Fourth Annual Report, 1977-78*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, 1978, p. 55.

Chapter 5: Coordination and Planning in Ontario: A Focus on Graduate Programming

4. Prevention of further duplication of graduate programs;
5. Recognition of high quality graduate programs in new fields of study for which there is a genuine need;
6. Maintenance of a satisfactory amount of scholarship and research activity in the university system.⁶⁷⁴

In deference to the strong tradition of institutional autonomy in Ontario, and to the history of voluntary collective planning undertaken by the universities, OCUA concluded that the "...major role in graduate planning in Ontario must remain grounded in the universities, individually and collectively."⁶⁷⁵ OCUA indicated that it saw its role as involving the enunciation of general quinquennial objectives, monitoring the extent to which these were being achieved, and recommending funding policies and mechanisms that were appropriate to the objectives.⁶⁷⁶ OCUA did not indicate how it would evaluate the degree to which the quinquennial objectives had been met by 1983-84, but did indicate that:

The success of the graduate planning enterprise during the first quinquennium will be primarily dependent upon the pursuit of excellence by institutions in their areas of strength, and of system rationalization by the university collectivity on the basis of quality and need.⁶⁷⁷

In light of these new objectives, OCUA felt that the existing funding criteria governing graduate programs were no longer adequate and developed the following criteria for screening new programs during the first quinquennium:

1. Evidence of need in Ontario and Canada to be provided by the Advisory Committee on Academic Planning and endorsed by the Council of Ontario Universities;
2. Certification from the Advisory Committee on Academic Planning through the

674. *Ibid.*

675. *Ibid.*

676. *Ibid.*, p. 56.

677. *Ibid.*, p.57.

Chapter 5: Coordination and Planning in Ontario: A Focus on Graduate Programming

Council of Ontario Universities that no similar program in the field(s) proposed is available in Ontario. (In exceptional circumstances Council may be willing to entertain a recommendation from ACAP through COU for funding a master's program where there is also strong evidence of regional importance and student demand);

3. Certification from the Advisory Committee on Academic Planning, through the Council of Ontario Universities that the proposed program has passed a rigorous appraisal and at the time of appraisal was not found to require improvements;
4. Certification from the institution that admissions to the program commenced prior to its being proposed for funding consideration.⁶⁷⁸

Once OCUA had received assurance from COU, based on advice from ACAP, that these four criteria had been met, OCUA took upon itself responsibility for "balancing fiscal realities against new initiatives" before making a final recommendation to the Minister.

Under the quinquennial planning approach, each university was required to submit an annual "rolling" five-year graduate plan which clearly indicated any institutional intentions for expansion or contraction of their graduate enterprise over the ensuing five-year period. Institutions would be bound not to propose for funding any new programs beyond those identified in their plans.

OCUA also recommended that enrolment growth at the master's level continue to be discounted by 50% and that increases in doctoral enrolment be discounted by 2/3 of the institutional Basic Income Units (BIU's) for the first quinquennium.⁶⁷⁹ This approach to financing protected university incomes in periods of enrolment decline while providing a disincentive for major expansion. In justifying this more rigid and interventionist approach to the development of the graduate enterprise in Ontario, OCUA stated:

678. *Ibid.*, p. 60.

679. *Ibid.*, pp. 61 and 62.

The graduate sector of the Ontario university system differs from other areas of university affairs in that its evolution has been characterized by a degree of control not found elsewhere. It has always been believed that graduate education is so important and so costly a venture that it has required this careful planning and co-ordination.⁶⁸⁰

OCUA also indicated that it would monitor the progress of graduate planning for quality and if necessary was prepared to take action to ensure that a high quality system was achieved:

The maintenance of high quality graduate programs and the elimination of poor quality programs has always been a prime objective of the university system. Now, more than ever, it is absolutely essential that this objective be realized through the agencies of COU and ACAP and using the criteria and objectives iterated by Council. Council is committed to awaiting the outcome of the control procedures before taking further action but would not hesitate to introduce further controls, should there be any indication that they are necessary.⁶⁸¹

In an OCUA report of September 1978, "The Ontario University System: A Statement of Issues", OCUA went as far as to discuss various structural alternatives to enhance system-wide control. OCUA indicated that

the degree of autonomy enjoyed by the institutions might be seen in some quarters as a roadblock to effective and speedy system rationalization...and ...this indicates a need for a strong central authority to institute planned system-wide changes. ...because the structure is somewhat relaxed and because OCUA lacks executive authority, institutions may still approach Government directly for their own benefit.⁶⁸²

OCUA's tactic of threatening to assume a greater role in graduate planning did not appear to suit the new Minister of Colleges and Universities, the Honourable Dr. Bette Stephenson, appointed in the summer of 1978. Although the Minister accepted both OCUA's objectives and criteria for the quinquennial approach to graduate planning, the political spirit

680. Ontario Council on University Affairs, "The Ontario University System: A Statement of Issues," *Fifth Annual Report, 1978-79*, Toronto : Ministry of Colleges and Universities, March 1979, p. 31.

681. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

682. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

Chapter 5: Coordination and Planning in Ontario: A Focus on Graduate Programming

at the time was strongly set against centralized control and government regulation. In accepting Council's advice regarding its quinquennial planning approach, the Minister expressed regret "...that, in Council's judgement, the regulation of graduate program planning and funding must continue for an additional five years".⁶⁸³ The Minister elaborated:

I recognize that Council and Ministry involvement in graduate planning has been in effect for at least seven years and that this involvement cannot be terminated overnight. However, I am serving notice that by the end of the first quinquennium Council's and the Ministry's involvement in graduate planning should be limited to verifying that new programs have been successfully appraised. Funding would then be provided within established global limits.⁶⁸⁴

In a letter to the university presidents on the same matter, the Minister wrote:

...eventually the universities will be able to plan and control the graduate sector without direction from OCUA or the Ministry. Believing as I do in the desirability of the university system having control of academic matters, I would have preferred to take this action now, but I have accepted OCUA's advice with respect to the next five years. ...[L]est there be any misunderstanding of my intention, I expect OCUA to work closely with COU and the universities during this period to ensure that adequate planning and rationalization processes are developed and put in place. Unless I can be satisfied with this I may, reluctantly, have to maintain centralized Government and OCUA involvement in graduate planning.⁶⁸⁵

Behind the scenes, however, the Minister harboured personal doubts about the universities' ability to effectively exercise the degree of collective academic restraint warranted by the constrained fiscal environment. It appears that Ministry staff, and particularly the Assistant Deputy Minister for Universities and Colleges, Benson Wilson, had effectively convinced the Minister to pursue her objectives via "collective autonomy" rather than greater

683. Letter from the Honourable Bette Stephenson, Minister of Colleges and Universities, to the Ontario Council on University Affairs, December 19, 1978.

684. *Ibid.*

685. Letter from the Honourable Bette Stephenson, Minister of Colleges and Universities, to the Ontario Council on University Affairs, November 9, 1979. According to Maurice Yeates, it was the latter issue that provoked COU to establish the Special Committee to Review Graduate Planning in September 1979.

government intervention. As Dr. Bette Stephenson recalls:

Benson [Wilson] was a total advocate for the self-government of universities, self-planning, self-structuring, self-everything of the universities. I kept saying to Benson, "they're not demonstrating that this is what they can do, now tell me!" He said "just give them five years and they will be able to do it." So I was willing to go along with that at first. I didn't think it was long enough, but I thought if they had at least a period of time of external forces helping them to plan that they just might get into the act and it might be fine. But I also thought that if they didn't demonstrate that they were doing it well, we didn't have to say at the end of five years "you're on your own now". One or two of them might have been able to do that, but we didn't have to say that there was a blanket agreement, that they were ...all going to...do their own planning at the end of the quinquennium. And Benson knew that, but he kept saying "you have to write to them, you have to tell them that at least you are thinking about this in a positive way and then they will probably accept it" which is the reason for the content of the letters. I'm still not convinced that most of them would have been ready at the end of five years. ...I really thought OCUA should have a hand in it and probably would have to have a hand in it for a little bit longer. But if you listen to any of the speeches I made to any of the universities, you will know that I told them that I thought that they were supposed to be the founts of intelligent activity, of cerebral functions, and that they should be able to do all of these things [and] why weren't they doing it?⁶⁸⁶

OCUA was not deterred from using threat tactics by the Minister's public expressions of discomfort with a greater role for government in graduate planning. Consistent with the Minister's personal views, throughout 1979, OCUA continued to take a leadership role, elaborating and refining its planning objectives, stating: "...the only means by which to ensure the vitality of the graduate enterprise on a long-term basis is through consolidation and system rationalization achieved through institutional role differentiation."⁶⁸⁷

In view of OCUA's interest in institutional role definition, in the Fall of 1979, COU was requested to ensure that "...the program should be offered and funded despite financial

686. Interview with Bette Stephenson, April 11, 1997.

687. Ontario Council on University Affairs, *Sixth Annual Report, 1979-80*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, 1980, p. 81.

constraint" and that "...the particular institution could best offer the program and that the program is consistent with the aims, objectives and existing strengths of the institution".⁶⁸⁸

COU declined to do this from 1979 to 1981, on the grounds that, as a body representative of the institutions, and given its mandate and mode of operating, it was not the appropriate agency to make that assessment. As a result of this stand-off, no new programs were funded for several years.

The quinquennial planning efforts of OCUA marked a major shift in the locus of decision-making responsibility with respect to graduate program planning. Up to this point, the universities, acting collectively through COU, had been able to prevent any significant degree of direct intervention by government or its advisory body by limiting their individual autonomy to preserve the collective freedom of the system. From 1979, collective action on the part of the universities was simply not sufficient to keep OCUA out of the leadership role in the planning process.

In response to the Minister's publicly-stated preference for returning responsibility for graduate planning to the universities, in 1980, OCUA proposed the concept of sectoral planning which was based on the identification of program strength within an institution.

5.7.1 Discussion of Sectoral Planning, 1980-1982

In response to the Minister's stated preference for returning responsibility for graduate planning to the universities, OCUA, under the leadership of William Winegard, former President of the University of Guelph, proposed the concept of sectoral planning based on the

688. *Ibid.*, p. 82.

identification of program strength within institutions. In some ways the proposal mirrored the California state system model, except that instead of designating institutions by academic function, they would be designated by academic sector. In this way, institutions would be exempt from planning constraints in areas for which they could demonstrate sufficient strength in a program field and would be prohibited from developing advanced programs in new areas, or areas in which programs were deemed to be weak. The sectoral planning process advocated by OCUA would assist universities to assume and retain authority for program planning.

The objectives of sectoral planning were:

1. To aid in the process of role identification and recognition.
2. To aid in the planning and funding of new graduate programs in the second quinquennium as a "map" for role differentiation.
3. To aid in the rationalization of the system and at the same time preserve institutional autonomy.⁶⁸⁹

The sectoral planning approach proposed by OCUA was based on the development of indicators of institutional strengths derived from the degree of institutional involvement in doctoral level programming.⁶⁹⁰ OCUA envisioned a situation where a different set of criteria could apply to different program areas for each institution. For example, in sectors where an institution was considered to have major involvement, new programs would need only a

689. *Ibid.*, p. 69.

690. 1) If an institution had at least 7.5% of system FTE doctoral enrolment in a sector, OCUA took this to indicate that the institution had a **major involvement** in that sector at the doctoral level and, therefore, significant provincial resources were being devoted to that sector by that particular institution.

2) If an institution had less than 7.5% of system FTE doctoral enrolment in a sector, OCUA took this to indicate that the institution had a rather more **limited involvement** in that sector. Although enrolment across the whole sector may be limited, that institution may have strengths within one or more disciplines within the sector.

3) If an institution did not offer any doctoral programs within a sector, it was considered to have had **no involvement** in the sector. *Ibid.*, p. 67.

Chapter 5: Coordination and Planning in Ontario: A Focus on Graduate Programming

quality appraisal in order to receive a funding recommendation. In sectors where an institution did not offer any programs, the institution would not propose the introduction of any programs. In sectors where an institution had limited involvement, any new program would be subject to funding criteria similar to those that existed for new programs.

OCUA noted that, at the time, final authority with respect to the funding of new graduate programs rested with the Minister. It was the Minister's stated goal, however, that full responsibility for the planning of the graduate enterprise eventually be returned to the system itself, once effective procedures for the assessment of programs were in place.⁶⁹¹ The Minister stated, by letter of March 5, 1980, her desire that "the appraisal/assessment system...be used to replace direct government and OCUA involvement in planning and approving the funding of graduate programs." OCUA indicated:

Council has made clear its belief that the responsibility for system rationalization and institutional role differentiation, as well as graduate planning, should, if possible, ultimately rest with COU and the universities. Council realizes that these tasks, which are essential to the quality and diversity of the Ontario university system, are tremendously difficult and may prove impossible for a voluntary association of universities to achieve. Council wishes to assist COU, in whatever manner possible, in achieving these goals...⁶⁹²

Council would not necessarily take this to mean that Council itself or even the Ministry should then be given the responsibility of coordinating graduate planning. It may well be that some other agency should be created within the system to perform this role.⁶⁹³

In 1979, COU referred the OCUA's approach to graduate program planning to a special committee for detailed study. The COU Special Committee to Review Graduate

691. *Ibid.*, p. 65.

692. *Ibid.*, p. 69.

693. *Ibid.*, p. 66.

Planning was expected to:

1. Review OCUA objectives for graduate planning in light of circumstances during the first quinquennium and anticipated circumstances thereafter;
2. Review the current and projected rate of progress in graduate planning during the first quinquennium; and
3. Recommend modifications in the objectives and mechanism for developing and implementing graduate planning policies.

5.7.2 *Final Report of the COU Special Committee to Review Graduate Planning, 1981*

In March 1981, Donald F. Forster, President of the University of Guelph and Chair of the Special Committee to Review Graduate Planning, provided COU with the Committee's *Final Report*. In view of projections that graduate enrolment levels would be relatively stable for the remainder of the 1980s, the Committee proposed a "major reorientation of graduate planning..."⁶⁹⁴

The Committee recommended a strengthened OCGS appraisals process and the introduction of periodic quality reviews of existing programs as well as fewer restrictions associated with obtaining funding for new master's programs in central disciplines and doctoral programs in areas of institutional strength. It recommended that COU appoint a Committee on Graduate Planning to "monitor the overall development of graduate studies in the province"⁶⁹⁵ and report to the university community and OCUA thereon. It recommended

694. Council of Ontario Universities, Special Committee to Review Graduate Planning, *Final Report of the Special Committee to Review Graduate Planning*, March 1981, p. 3. This committee consisted of George E. Connell, President of the University of Western Ontario; Donald F. Forster, President, University of Guelph; G.A. Harrower, President, Lakehead University; J. Leyerle, Dean, School of Graduate Studies, University of Toronto; L.A.K. Watt, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of Waterloo; Maurice Yeates, Dean, School of Graduate Studies and Research, Queen's University; Ron L. Watts (Ex officio), Chairman, COU, Principal, Queen's University; J. Percy Smith (Observer), Chair, COU Committee on Long-Range Planning; and Grant G. Clarke, (Secretary), Deputy to the Executive Director, COU.

695. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

that OCUA establish an academic advisory committee to advise it on matters of program funding policy and to apply program funding criteria.⁶⁹⁶

With respect to COU's role in graduate program planning, the Committee observed:

Experience has shown that COU, given its nature, being representative of the institutions, cannot effectively deal with the review of programme proposals according to a set of planning criteria which it has not established itself. In particular, COU should not be expected to deal with the question of role definition of its member institutions. In these matters, COU's role should be restricted to offering general advice to OCUA, which properly has the responsibility to recommend to government with respect to them.⁶⁹⁷

Citing a number of perceived shortcomings in OCUA's sectoral planning proposal, the Special Committee to Review Graduate Planning suggested a modified sectoral approach, noting, however, that: "Much more discussion and reflection is required before a satisfactory solution is apparent."⁶⁹⁸ In particular, the universities had rejected OCUA's enrolment-based definition of program strength, since the proposed approach would constrain the development of new programs at institutions that currently lacked "strength" in a particular sector. OCUA attempted to quantify program quality to broaden the definition of strength, but universities argued that only peer review could adequately measure program quality. Due to irreconcilable differences between the universities and OCUA about how sectoral strength and quality would be defined and measured, in 1982, OCUA decided that a sectoral approach to graduate planning should not be established.

696. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

697. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

698. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

5.7.3 Structural Revision

OCUA continued to influence graduate program planning on the margin through its response to five-year graduate plans, and the graduate program funding process which evaluated new programs against the criteria of societal need and institutional appropriateness to determine funding eligibility. In a November 1980 report from the university presidents to Premier Davis, the Presidents expressed concern over the role OCUA was taking in respect to program planning, since, in their view, the membership of OCUA lacked the academic credibility to assume such a role. The presidents suggested two potential remedies - a strengthening of the academic membership of OCUA or the establishment of

an academic advisory committee, composed of members nominated by C.O.U. but advising O.C.U.A. directly on matters involving academic judgments, [which] might enhance the willingness of the academic community to trust O.C.U.A. with decisions which have a major impact upon academic affairs, while ensuring the relative independence of O.C.U.A. so that it does not become simply a mouthpiece for either the universities or government.⁶⁹⁹

The Presidents concluded by stating:

...government and the universities must together work out clearly what are in future to be the precise relative roles of the individual institutions, C.O.U., O.C.U.A. and M.C.U. in relation to the planning and approval processes in order to avoid the present tendency for O.C.U.A. and C.O.U. each to pass the buck to the other.⁷⁰⁰

By 1981, COU had concluded that it was not able to "...effectively deal with the review of program proposals according to a set of planning criteria which it had not established

699. Committee of Executive Heads of Ontario Universities, "The Situation of Ontario Universities", November 5, 1980, p. 29.

700. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

itself".⁷⁰¹ Since the role OCUA had defined for itself in the area of graduate planning was duplicating some aspects of the work of ACAP, COU recommended that ACAP be disbanded, leaving planning to OCUA. COU indicated that it would concentrate on the role the universities could perform best - the quality appraisals process. COU then proceeded to strengthen appraisals by creating a periodic appraisals process to review existing graduate programs once every seven years, which would parallel the standard appraisal process established much earlier to review new programs. Universities had clearly accepted that while, as a cooperative community, COU could enforce judgements of academic quality, it could not survive and be part of a process that would limit individual institutional aspirations. Another smidgen of collective autonomy was sacrificed on the altar of individual institutional autonomy. Universities appeared to prefer government intervention over having to make tough collective decisions related to system development.

OCUA accepted this division of roles and in 1982 established its own Academic Advisory Committee with a mandate to provide expert advice in the area of graduate program planning based on OCUA's funding criteria, to monitor COU's new appraisal system and to review COU's annual compilation of doctoral program macroindicator data. This Academic Advisory Committee was composed of seven outstanding academics, appointed by Order-in-Council; broadly representative of the various discipline sectors (Humanities, Social Sciences, Biological Sciences, Pure and Applied Sciences, Health Sciences). In practice, there were representatives on the Committee from Engineering, Humanities, Social Science, Physical Science, Life Science, the Health professions, and another professional program or

701. L.A.K. Watt, "Graduate Studies in Ontario : The Role of the Universities and the Role of Government". In *Governments and Higher Education - The Legitimacy of Intervention*, Cicely Watson (Ed.), Toronto : Higher Education Group, The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1987, p. 93.

multidisciplinary field such as Environmental Studies. Several founding members of the Academic Advisory Committee, including its first Chair, were former members of ACAP.

By the end of the first graduate planning quinquennium the division of responsibility for planning between OCUA and COU had been clearly delineated - COU would concentrate on the administration of quality assessments, and OCUA with the assistance of the Academic Advisory Committee would be responsible for the "planning" and funding decisions. During the 1980s, a period of new program expansion, OCUA's role in the planning of the graduate enterprise was enhanced, particularly in the area related to the introduction of new programs.

As David M. Cameron noted:

Universities, holding to hallowed notions of institutional autonomy and academic freedom, had not really accepted the legitimacy of provincial coordination except as superficial rhetoric....yet their own efforts at voluntary coordination, under the banner of "collective autonomy" had, with a few notable exceptions, simply not been up to the task.⁷⁰²

Rather than putting planning back in the hands of the universities, as the Ministry had wished, in 1983-84 the government, through OCUA, continued to refine the objectives and criteria of the first quinquennial period and applied them to a second quinquennial planning exercise. The division of labour initiated in 1982, heralded an era of relative stability in academic program planning matters. To 1996, system-level program planning at the graduate level in Ontario continued to be limited to OCUA's evaluation of new programs requiring Ministerial approval for funding eligibility, and the collection of institutional plans for new graduate programs.⁷⁰³ The university collectivity, through OCGS, continued to be responsible

702. David M. Cameron, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

703. "Core" undergraduate Arts and Science programs are funded automatically. See Ontario Council on University Affairs, "Advisory Memorandum 82-VII, Undergraduate Program Approvals", *Ninth Annual Report 1982-83*, pp. 98-108.

for system-wide assessments of graduate program quality. Undergraduate program quality assessments remained throughout the responsibility of individual universities.

5.8 A Brief Overview of Program Coordination and Planning at the Undergraduate Level

Concern with graduate programs continued to centre on issues of program selection and restraint. Despite substantial increases in full-time undergraduate enrolment of 164% between 1966 and 1982, from roughly 60,000 to 159,000⁷⁰⁴ students, the undergraduate enterprise had largely avoided system-level planning and coordination efforts. Exceptions occurred among the professional undergraduate programs, notably in engineering. In 1968, the Committee on University Affairs placed a request for new engineering facilities on hold pending further justification. In October of 1969, the Committee of Presidents engaged the Committee of Ontario Deans of Engineering (CODE) to undertake a comprehensive review and analysis of the universities' future plans in engineering to the year 1976 covering both undergraduate and graduate fields. The objective of the study was "to create a master plan which might be used as a guide for rational growth of engineering education..."⁷⁰⁵ It was hoped that the experience gained from this study would form the basis for the development of a model on which planning studies of other disciplines could be based. The resultant report, *Ring of Iron: A Study of Engineering Education in Ontario*, released in 1971, stands as the lone example of a master plan for any discipline and resulted, among other things, in a

704. Data sources: The Commission on the Future Development of the Universities of Ontario, *Ontario Universities 1984: Issues and Alternatives, Background Data, Part 1, Table 1 "Enrolment in Ontario Universities"*, and Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, USIS-UAR Data, "University Enrolment (1979-1995)."

705. Council of Ontario Universities, *A Report to the Committee of Presidents of Universities of Ontario, Ring of Iron: A Study of Engineering Education in Ontario*, Toronto: Council of Ontario Universities, December 1970, Preface, p. iii.

reduction in the number of doctoral students in PhD programs in engineering in 1972-73. The report endorsed role differentiation among university schools of engineering and advocated the need for a quality appraisal process for undergraduate engineering programs parallel to that of the OCGS process. While it provided a concrete example of critical collective self-evaluation, its example was not replicated across the undergraduate disciplines. While COU ultimately adopted a number of the recommendations in the report, much less rationalization resulted than had been recommended. Neither the Committee on University Affairs, nor the Department of University Affairs commented on the COU position or indicated that they wished to monitor implementation.⁷⁰⁶

Universities in the early 1980s were preoccupied with the threat of declining student numbers. The COU Committee on Enrolment Statistics and Projections (CESP) was asked to provide enrolment projections to 1990. CESP focused on the 18-24 age group, and projected that full-time undergraduate enrolment would drop from between 154,000 and 166,000 to between 135,000 and 151,000 in 1992. The participation rate which had peaked in 1976-77 at 13.2% was expected to drop to 11.5% in the early 1980s and then rise only slightly toward the end of the decade.⁷⁰⁷ The projections of the Science Council of Canada in *University Research in Jeopardy* assumed an even closer relationship between the sharply declining size of the 18-24 age group leading to projections of more significant enrolment declines. The difficulty of enrolment forecasting had been recognized from past experience. Once again the forecasts would confound academic planning at the system level due to unforeseen increases

706. Bernard Trotter *et al.*, *Planning for Planning...*, *op cit.*, p. 34.

707. Council of Ontario Universities, "Numbers in the Clouds: A Discussion of Enrolment Problems for the 1980's by the Long-Range Planning Committee", July 15, 1980, p. 2.

in the participation rate. While significant enrolment declines were anticipated, undergraduate enrolment was about to increase dramatically from 144,975 full-time undergraduate students in 1980 to 165,575 in 1983 to over 200,000 by 1991.⁷⁰⁸

In light of the increased emphasis on academic planning, in part due to the long-term prospects for fiscal constraint of government finances, COU established a standing Committee on Long-Range Planning in 1978 "to review system-wide issues and propose plans for dealing with them"⁷⁰⁹ as a response to OCUA concerns about rational academic development. In March 1980, the Committee issued a controversial document entitled *Challenge of Substance: A Report on Undergraduate Programmes in Ontario Universities by the Committee on Long-Range Planning of the Council of Ontario Universities*. The *Report* noted that:

The undergraduate enrolment at Ontario universities is almost eight times the graduate enrolment, a ratio which seems unlikely to change markedly. In spite of those proportions, while graduate programmes have been subjected to a very considerable amount of examination from the point of view of the university system, no such scrutiny of undergraduate programmes has been carried on...One reason for considering the undergraduate sector now is the current concern expressed by OCUA that universities develop statements about their individual roles within the system.⁷¹⁰

At the heart of the Committee's concern was academic planning at the undergraduate level.

708. Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, Full-time Undergraduate University Enrolment 1979-1995, USIS-UAR enrolment data.

709. J. Percy Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 578.

710. Council of Ontario Universities, *Challenge of Substance: A Report on Undergraduate Programmes in Ontario Universities by the Committee on Long-Range Planning of the Council of Ontario Universities*, March 1980, p. 1.

The Committee stated:

With the termination of the period of expansion, and especially with increasing fiscal constraint and the prospect of declining enrolment, it becomes urgently desirable that there be a conscious effort to bring a degree of coordination into the area of undergraduate programmes. For what now exists is a system of academically autonomous universities, some of which have (or have had) reasonably coherent perceptions of distinctive objectives and roles, but all of which have for some years been obliged to respond to the pressures of competition in ways not necessarily appropriate to those perceptions. Much of the academic programming in Ontario developed through the operation of laissez-faire. [emphasis supplied] At the graduate level, that approach was largely abandoned when the mechanisms of appraisal and control were introduced. At the undergraduate level, programming in the arts and sciences, especially for the three-year degrees, still reflects the assumption that the total educational good provided by the separate universities, making curricular and other decisions in the light of their institutional goals and interests, at least equals the educational good that might be provided by the system if it were to proceed as a system. The challenge now forcibly confronting the universities is that of making good the assumption.⁷¹¹

From the Committee's perspective:

One very great obstacle in the way of such a development [the reasoned ordering of undergraduate programme development in the system] is the enforced competition engendered - intentionally - by enrolment-driven financing, and we believe that COU and OCUA must find a way of removing that obstacle to cooperative planning.⁷¹²

The other major obstacle identified was the structural and functional limitations of COU itself:

"...COU has no mechanism by which it [inter-institutional planning and co-operation] could be assured, even if it were agreed upon."⁷¹³

The Committee noted that, in 1976, COU approved the report of a Special Committee to Assess University Policies and Plans. One of the recommendations of the Special Committee was that: "COU and the universities should commit themselves to continuing and

711. *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

712. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

713. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

expanding their efforts in planning and coordination and should receive financial support from government to assist these efforts.”⁷¹⁴ It further noted that the Special Committee had suggested that “The Council of Deans of Arts and Science could be asked to review opportunities for coordination of undergraduate programs...”⁷¹⁵ In its report, the Committee on Long-Range Planning made it clear that:

So far as we know, no steps whatever were taken to implement those and other recommendations, in spite of COU's formal approval of them; [emphasis supplied] so that three years later, OCUA has felt it necessary to initiate discussion of institutional objectives. As to the state of coordination, we have indicated our view of it in this Report. It may be that at the point at which COU commits itself to action on a system-wide issue, concern for institutional autonomy inhibits virtually every significant coordinated effort. If so, we suggest that the nature and purpose of university autonomy should be very carefully studied.⁷¹⁶

Why was it that the Deans of Arts and Science were so apparently reluctant to be drawn into a system-level academic coordinating function? Former member of the COU Special Committee to Review Graduate Planning, Maurice Yeates, suggests that

they didn't want to meet because they didn't believe in doing anything that would suggest that there was a collectivity. They were philosophically against it. Particularly in reaction to the developing strength of OCGS and the graduate Deans, [who] had...a common objective. Within institutions, the sense of community and commonality that had developed amongst the graduate Deans was looked at partly in envy and partly with some speculation by the other Deans, who thought that...the graduate Deans were trying to undermine university autonomy. They, therefore, would not in any way meet under any collective umbrella, particularly a COU umbrella, because they wanted to assure that university autonomy was paramount and that their fiefdoms were paramount. Don't forget that Deans of Arts and Science often control huge portions of university budgets.⁷¹⁷

714. *Ibid.*, p. 33, citing the report of the Special Committee to Assess University Policies and Plans, 1976.

715. *Ibid.*, p. 34, citing the report of the Special Committee to Assess University Policies and Plans, 1976.

716. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

717. Interview with Maurice Yeates, April 15, 1997.

Ultimately, the Committee on Long-Range Planning made the following recommendations:

1. That each Ontario university immediately advise all other universities in the Province of all proposals for new undergraduate programmes now under active consideration at any level of decision-making; and hereafter of any new proposal for an undergraduate programme when it comes under active consideration. We suggest that the COU secretariat serve as a clearinghouse for this purpose.
2. That COU establish a standing policy committee on undergraduate programmes....[to] study...the changing needs of the system and the best means of achieving appropriate responses to those needs; the identification of new areas of concern and the encouragement of orderly programme development in relation to them; the facilitation and encouragement of discussion among universities of undergraduate programmes and policies, from the point of view of the system. The Committee should meet regularly and report to COU at least once a year...⁷¹⁸

The third and final recommendation advocated the immediate adoption of the first recommendation and that the balance be treated as an interim statement of COU to be distributed to all deans responsible for undergraduate programs for broad discussion and reaction.⁷¹⁹

COU did not endorse this report. As Smith observed:

The Committee deliberately chose to focus on the principle involved - that individual institutions must be willing to sacrifice some of their autonomy in the interest of promoting the effectiveness of the system as a whole...Whether or not the committee's strategy was at fault, COU simply declined to accept the principle...⁷²⁰

In mid-July 1980, COU's Committee on Long-Range Planning produced another report - this time on undergraduate program enrolment planning. The Committee observed that there

718. *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

719. *Ibid.*

720. Percy Smith, *op. cit.* p. 578.

had been significant declines in the proportion of students enrolled in Arts and Science programs while enrolment in professional programs increased substantially. From 1967-68 to 1977-78 enrolment in Arts and Science programs declined 21.2% and professional program enrolments increased 28.8%.⁷²¹ Institutions without professional programs or with no excess capacity in their professional programs of study were not able to take advantage of the enrolment stability and opportunities for program expansion afforded other institutions. Lacking the academic "risk capital" generated by enrolment growth, the Committee observed that "many 'new' programs have...tended to be imitations of programs already existing in the system."⁷²² The Committee concluded that:

Firm undergraduate planning on the basis of enrolment projections is impossible except for a very few institutions with special advantages of history and location: most obviously, Queen's and Toronto. ...It is ...crucial to recognize that, even in that situation and in a financial scheme that is enrolment-driven, they are not secure so long as there remains a governmental policy of under-funding of the system as a whole. Their security is only relative to that of the others, and is in part achieved at the expense of the greater insecurity of the rest.⁷²³

The Committee appeared to resign itself to the fact that as a collectivity, the universities had no political will to undertake greater coordination and planning with respect to the undergraduate enterprise:

...steps in connection with enrolment that might ensure greater stability in the system and help to make long-range planning a reality, would require a capacity to make decisions that C.O.U. is clearly not prepared to consider. The Committee on Long-Range Planning has therefore no further recommendations in this area.⁷²⁴

721. Council of Ontario Universities, "Numbers in the Clouds: A Discussion of Enrolment Problems for the 1980's by the Long-Range Planning Committee", July 15, 1980, p. 15.

722. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

723. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

724. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

After considerable debate, COU approved an amended version of the recommendation of exchanging information on new undergraduate academic programs on a regular basis and assigned responsibility for it to the Vice-Presidents Academic of each institution. In fall 1980 a formal Vice-Presidents Academic group was established, the mandate of the Committee on Long-Range Planning was allowed to lapse, and the Committee left unstaffed. It is noteworthy that the Vice-Presidents Academic group never actively assembled under COU auspices until 1996 with the creation of a COU undergraduate program quality appraisals process.

5.8.1 OCUA's Role in Undergraduate Program Planning

OCUA's primary contribution to undergraduate program coordination and planning involved recommending new programs to the Minister for funding approval, and the development and implementation of related evaluative criteria. This responsibility evolved gradually and in a piecemeal fashion. Just prior to OCUA's establishment on September 25, 1974, the Minister of Colleges and Universities stated that all new professional programs, which included health science programs, would require OCUA review and recommendation prior to receipt of funding approval.⁷²⁵ In 1978, the Minister approved a funding approval process for all diploma and degree programs offered by Ryerson Polytechnical Institute.⁷²⁶

In 1980, OCUA observed with respect to undergraduate program planning, that:

For most of the growth period of the last twenty years, there has been at least

725. By letter dated August 1, 1974, the Hon. James Auld, Minister of Colleges and Universities at the time, stated that "the Ministry will only approve funding of a new professional program after the OCUA recommends the program." See Ontario Council on University Affairs, "Advisory Memorandum 77-V, Funding for the Mining Engineering and the Mineral Processing Engineering Programs at Laurentian University", *Fourth Annual Report 1977-78*, p. 45.

726. Now Ryerson Polytechnic University. See Ontario Council on University Affairs, "Advisory Memorandum 78-IV", *Fifth Annual Report 1978-79*.

at the undergraduate level, little attempt on the part of the university system in Ontario to coordinate program development. There has been a minimum of cooperative planning, on the assumption that, somehow or other, an acceptable total provincial array of programs would follow automatically from the sum of the plans of each institution.⁷²⁷

OCUA reviewed the institutions' undergraduate program plans and discussed them with university representatives during the 1980 Spring hearings. OCUA concluded:

It has become increasingly clear to Council...that this autonomous approach to undergraduate planning is no longer appropriate from a provincial perspective. Program proliferation, when combined with financial restraint and enrolment decline, will lead to the spreading of resources too thinly and the dilution of strengths. In order to avoid these problems, some degree of cooperation at the undergraduate level is essential and some degree of coordination may be necessary. ...It is Council's opinion that it is not appropriate from a system viewpoint that the institutions continue to plan in isolation from one another...the institutions must begin to plan cooperatively.⁷²⁸

Concern about both the extent and types of programs being planned by the institutions caused OCUA to reconsider the practice of granting automatic funding eligibility to certain types of new non-professional undergraduate programs. OCUA recommended that COU monitor the development of "special" and "quasi-professional" programs, defined as programs that were neither "core" Arts and Science nor professional programs.⁷²⁹ OCUA argued that an exchange of information among universities for core arts and science and quasi-professional/special programs would be sufficient for the time being and that Ministerial approval for funding would continue to be automatic. However, with respect to professional programs, a more formal planning process was required. COU would be required to advise OCUA on funding

727. *Ibid.*, p. 45.

728. Ontario Council on University Affairs, "System Rationalization: A Responsibility and An Opportunity", *Seventh Annual Report 1980-81*, September 1980, pp. 58-60.

729. OCUA defined "special" programs as programs for which there was not sufficient need for every university in Ontario to develop the expertise and resources to offer. Quasi-professional programs were defined as programs that were traditionally offered in Arts and Science faculties, but had the potential to develop into professional programs. *Ibid.*, p. 61.

eligibility prior to Ministerial approval. There was limited support for this OCUA proposal amongst the universities as many felt there was no pressing need for coordination and rationalization at the undergraduate level. However, some argued that if it must be centrally undertaken, it should not be in the hands of COU.⁷³⁰

Professional programs submitted by individual institutions to OCUA in 1980 for advice on funding eligibility were referred by OCUA to COU for judgements in the areas of need, availability of similar programs elsewhere, ability of the university to offer the program and the appropriateness of offering it at the sponsor institution. COU initiated an information gathering process, but upon the receipt of mixed views from the member institutions, COU informed OCUA that it was not prepared to submit recommendations. The inability or unwillingness of COU to respond to OCUA concerns with respect to institutional appropriateness reflected the fundamental dilemma of a voluntary association faced with passing judgements on member institutions. Had COU done otherwise, the very nature of the organization might have been irrevocably transformed and any hope of collective action for the future might have been destroyed.

In November 1981, the Minister of Colleges and Universities announced a suspension of the current policy regarding the funding of new undergraduate programs until such time as the government had responded to the report of the Committee on the Future Role of Universities in Ontario (Fisher Committee). When it became clear that the response expected in early 1982 was unlikely to be forthcoming until considerably later, OCUA issued an advisory memorandum in which an undergraduate program review process was proposed that

730. Council of Ontario Universities, *Squeezing the Triangle: Review 1978-79 to 1981-82*, Toronto: The Council, 1982, p. 13.

would enable the Minister to terminate the “freeze” on undergraduate program funding. The proposed process involved automatic funding of “core” Arts and Science programs, and specific funding approvals for professional, quasi-professional and special programs. The Minister accepted this advice, resulting in the removal of the “freeze” on funding for new undergraduate programs and an expanded undergraduate program funding approval process. OCUA argued that the process of approvals it had recommended “will provide an adequate check on unnecessary proliferation of programs and undesirable duplication in the universities and will safeguard the public interest in the funding of these programs.”⁷³¹ When compared to coordination and planning efforts at the graduate level from the 1960s, comparable “steering” of new undergraduate program development through funding incentives and disincentives was a very late entrant on the scene indeed.

As a result of COU’s refusal to comment on the institutional appropriateness of member institutions’ ability to offer new programs, the Academic Advisory Committee (AAC) of OCUA was created in January 1982. The review of proposals for new undergraduate professional programs became one of its responsibilities.

In 1989, OCUA introduced a procedure for “cursory” review of new undergraduate programs created by modifying already funded programs⁷³² and later that same year made the Academic Advisory Committee responsible for advising it on the funding eligibility of all (quasi-professional and special programs in addition to professional) undergraduate programs against the criteria which had been in place since 1982 - namely quality and financial viability

731. Ontario Council on University Affairs, “Advisory Memorandum 82-VII, Undergraduate Program Approvals” *Ninth Annual Report 1982-83*, August 13, 1982, p. 104.

732. Ontario Council on University Affairs, “Advisory Memorandum 89-I, New Undergraduate Quasi-professional, Special and Professional Program Funding”, *Sixteenth Annual Report 1989-90*, 1990, pp. 21-22.

as attested to by an institution's Senate and the governing board; evidence of societal need, student demand, local and/or regional support; and institutional appropriateness. OCUA reserved for itself the decision as to whether or not the program was deserving of funding even in a time of economic restraint.⁷³³ AAC was also given responsibility for the review of institutional reports of new "core" Arts and Science programs which continued to receive automatic funding eligibility so long as they were reported annually to the Minister through OCUA.

In part, undergraduate academic programs remained much less regulated and planned than graduate programs due to the resistance of senior university administrators from the Presidential level on down to face the issue of institutional self-denial. Deans of Arts and Science were on record concerning their opposition to province-wide controls over undergraduate programs from the outset of provincial efforts to increase program coordination and planning. In 1972, the Council of Deans of Arts and Science had stated:

We accept the view that in the field of graduate studies province-wide co-ordination may contribute to the avoidance of unnecessary duplication of expensive specialties within Ontario universities. But we are firmly opposed to province-wide controls over specific undergraduate programmes within the arts and sciences in Ontario universities because we are convinced that in undergraduate work in these areas any single specialty must be considered as one of a number of mutually supporting fields of learning. The people of Ontario will be best served by having available variety in the undergraduate programmes within its universities. This will be achieved best if each university autonomously designs its own blend of specific programmes.⁷³⁴

Ironically, in the same document, the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies took a completely

733. Ontario Council on University Affairs, "Advisory Memorandum 89-IX, New Undergraduate Quasi-professional, Special and Professional Program Funding 1990-91", *Sixteenth Annual Report 1989-90*, 1990, p. 217.

734. Council of Deans of Arts and Science of the Ontario Universities, untitled statement in Council of Ontario Universities, *Responses to the Draft Report of the Commission on Post-Secondary Education in Ontario*, Toronto: Council of Ontario Universities, 1972, p. 43

different view which was based on its experience of graduate program coordination:

Through its Appraisals Committee and its Advisory Committee on Academic Planning, the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies has introduced province-wide coordination and planning of graduate programs in order to maintain high academic quality and to avoid unnecessary duplication of graduate offerings. There is no reason to suppose that coordination and planning cannot be carried out at the undergraduate level in a manner which is equally as effective.⁷³⁵

There was clearly no consensus on the matter of undergraduate program planning within the university community. While it is interesting to note that in 1980, university presidents ventured the thought of extending the quality appraisals process to include professional and quasi-professional programs in order to qualify them for funding,⁷³⁶ it is not surprising that this was never formally addressed.

Although OCUA became the formal locus of undergraduate system-level coordination and planning, its impact at the undergraduate level was negligible. From the mid-1980s it was OCUA's practice to require institutions to submit a list of new core arts and science programs to be offered, although it did not ask for information regarding program closures, restructuring or suspensions. This information was compiled by staff and copied to COU and the Minister for information. Core arts and science programs were exempt from OCUA examination, receiving automatic funding eligibility under the terms of the funding formula. All other undergraduate programs requesting funding eligibility were circulated to COU which sent them out to its member institutions for comment with respect to duplication of existing programs. COU compiled the results in an anonymous format for OCUA's use. It was widely known that some institutions, as a matter of principle, refused to comment on the need for new

735. *Ibid.*, p. 44-45.

736. Committee of Executive Heads of Ontario Universities, "The Situation of Ontario Universities", November 5, 1980, p. 27.

programs proposed by “sister” institutions, or at least refused to comment negatively. Thus, while helpful to the Academic Advisory Committee in a confirmatory fashion, overall the COU responses were of questionable value.

5.9 Graduate Programs in the Second Quinquennium, 1984 to 1989: Refining the Objectives

Due to the government's appointment, in December 1983, of the Commission on the Future Development of Universities in Ontario (the Bovey Commission), OCUA considered it to be inappropriate to offer long-term advice concerning graduate program planning at that time. OCUA, therefore, offered interim advice on the issues arising from its objectives and criteria for the second quinquennium of graduate program planning, from 1984-85 to 1988-89.

OCUA indicated that quality, system rationalization and the elimination of duplication were still appropriate objectives for the second quinquennium. Amended objectives were stated as follows:

- recognition and protection of outstanding and good quality doctoral and master's programs;
- maintenance of a satisfactory level of scholarship and research activity in the university system;
- elimination of graduate programs of unsatisfactory quality;
- elimination of unjustifiable duplication among existing graduate programs;
- prevention of unjustifiable duplication by new graduate programs; and
- recognition of high quality graduate programs in new fields of study for which there is a genuine need and student demand.⁷³⁷

Modifications to the OCUA funding criteria applied to new graduate programs

737. Ontario Council on University Affairs, *Tenth Annual Report, 1983-84*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, 1984, p. 65.

included the addition of "institutional appropriateness" and "funding despite a climate of financial constraint" as specific criteria. Universities were no longer required to have students enrolled in a new program before an application for funding was made (the universities had strenuously objected to this provision since they would be committed to enroll students even if the program was not approved for funding). Interim criteria accepted by the government were as follows:

1. That the program has passed a rigorous academic appraisal, as certified by the Council of Ontario Universities (COU), and at the time of appraisal was not found to require improvements.
2. That there is evidence of societal need and student demand for the program in Ontario and/or Canada.
3. That the proposed program does not duplicate an existing program in Ontario unless the institution proposing the new program demonstrates to Council's satisfaction that exceptional circumstances obtain such that Council should recommend the program for funding despite the duplication involved.
4. That the program is consistent with the aims, objectives and existing strengths of the institution offering the program, and is included in the institution's five-year plan.
5. That the program is deserving of funding even in a time of economic constraint.⁷³⁸

OCUA indicated that, in addition, in "...coming to grips with the problem of unjustifiable program duplication,...[it] will, ... rely considerably on the new COU appraisals process and on the advice of Council's Academic Advisory Committee with respect to the existing array of graduate program offerings."⁷³⁹ The Council concluded that these specific recommendations would assist in the achievement of both OCUA's system-wide goals of institutional role differentiation and system rationalization, and the particular objectives

738. *Ibid.*, p. 72.

739. *Ibid.*, p. 74.

enunciated for the graduate area.

During the first quinquennium, 1979-1984, OCUA had concentrated on planning for the development of new high quality graduate programs. At the same time, consolidation of existing programs was still on OCUA's agenda. OCUA indicated that "...the elimination of duplication among existing programs may become an explicitly stated objective for the second quinquennial period."⁷⁴⁰ In the event, the second quinquennium interim objectives did include the elimination of unjustifiable duplication among existing graduate programs as an objective. However, OCUA failed to introduce a mechanism at the system level to achieve this. Ultimately, OCUA relied upon the OCGS periodic appraisals process as the mechanism for closing existing programs of unacceptable quality. OCUA linked unacceptable program quality to public support by recommending that all programs failing periodic appraisal have their funding eligibility withdrawn.⁷⁴¹ OCUA did not expand its direct control beyond the review of new program proposals. The balance of the OCUA objectives and policies for the second quinquennium differed only marginally from those of the first quinquennium.

Mid-second quinquennium, the division of roles between the university collectivity and OCUA was briefly challenged when OCUA and AAC both began to question the rigour of the

740. Ontario Council on University Affairs, *Fourth Annual Report, 1977-78*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, 1978, p. 56.

741. In practice there were relatively few (10) graduate programs over the period 1984 to 1996 that were deemed to be of unacceptable quality and which required OCUA to recommend that the funding eligibility for them be withdrawn. Graduate programs that OCUA recommended become ineligible for funding included South Asian Studies (PhD) at the University of Toronto, OCUA recommendation 91-64; Industrial Relations (PhD) at the University of Windsor, OCUA recommendation 89-68; Architecture (MArch) at the University of Toronto, and Classics (MA) at Carleton University, OCUA recommendation 87-77; Pharmacology (MSc and PhD) at the University of Ottawa, and Adult Education (PhD) at OISE, OCUA recommendation 85-40; German (MA) at the University of Western Ontario, Romance Languages (MA) at Wilfrid Laurier University, and French (MA) at the University of Windsor in OCUA recommendation 84-26. What this analysis fails to illustrate is the number of graduate programs that were closed voluntarily by the institutions for lack of quality before they were appraised by OCGS.

appraisals process, which was the basis for the rationalization of existing programs for the quinquennium, and was the threshold of quality over which a new program must pass before being eligible for funding approval. The Academic Advisory Committee of OCUA was required to certify that programs had been rigorously appraised by OCGS, but contended that it could not make such a certification since it had no access to the confidential appraisal process.

Unwilling to accept OCGS assurances of the degree of rigour involved in the appraisal process, in 1985, OCUA established a three-member commission chaired by former OCUA Chair, J. Stefan Dupré to examine the appraisals process.⁷⁴² The Commission's report concluded that the appraisals process "produces reliable and credible judgements of the academic quality of existing and proposed graduate programs in Ontario."⁷⁴³ The results of this report were accepted by OCUA and the government, and entrenched the division of roles of the university collectivity and the government in the graduate program planning process.

5.10 The Third Planning Quinquennium, 1989-1994: Rational Expansion

The second planning quinquennium drew to a close in 1988-89. OCUA launched a comprehensive review of graduate program planning objectives and policies, which included consultation with the universities individually, during the 1987 and 1988 Spring Hearings, and collectively, through COU and OCGS.

In February 1988, OCUA announced its intention to initiate a review of the objectives,

742. J. Stefan Dupré (Chairman), Mark-Adelard Tremblay, and George Harrower were the commissioners.

743. Ontario Council on University Affairs, *Thirteenth Annual Report, 1986-87*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, 1987, p. 82.

criteria, and processes for funding graduate programs during the third quinquennium beginning 1989-90. The most important questions OCUA raised involved the relevance of the existing program approvals process in light of the recently approved corridor funding system, which completely decoupled changes in enrolment levels (within an increase or decrease of 3% of their 1986-87 levels) from established institutional funding levels and effectively “dulled” the institutional relevance of program funding approval. No longer would an approved program generate additional funding entitlements in the next academic year. However, enrolments would be considered “eligible for counting” in relation to targeted funding proposals or in the event of increased total allocations to institutions which increased the range of enrolments for which a given institution was being funded. Other issues under reconsideration were the longstanding embargo on funding of doctoral programs at “emerging” universities (in place since 1972), the effectiveness of the OCGS appraisal process in achieving rationalization of existing graduate programs, and the effectiveness of the existing criteria in achieving OCUA’s objectives for the graduate enterprise.

At these hearings, OCUA was advised by COU that OCGS felt “over-regulated by OCUA to the detriment of the province” and was advised to “take attention off graduate studies”.⁷⁴⁴ This approach, it was underlined, would also be more consistent with the academic flexibility afforded by the new “enrolment insensitive” corridor funding mechanism. Since the subject of the hearings in 1988 also included a discussion of institutional role differentiation and goal statements, COU argued that “If satisfactory arrangements are put in place for the articulation of institutional roles in the light of provincial objectives,...the policy restricting the

744. Author’s personal notes from the COU hearing of April 8, 1988.

offering of doctoral programmes should be abandoned....” adding that if new doctoral programs can be shown to be consistent with an academic plan, and of good quality, this should provide sufficient accountability.⁷⁴⁵

OCUA went on to develop planning objectives for the third quinquennium that basically reiterated those of the second quinquennium, namely:

1. Recognition and protection of high quality graduate programs.
2. Recognition of high quality graduate programs in new fields of study for which there is a genuine need and student demand.
3. Elimination of graduate programs of unsatisfactory quality
4. Prevention of unjustifiable duplication by new graduate programs.
5. Elimination of unjustifiable duplication among existing graduate programs.
6. Maintenance of a satisfactory level of scholarship and research activity in the university system.

While the elimination of unjustifiable duplication among existing graduate programs had been an objective of the second quinquennium since the dissolution of ACAP, there had never been a process or structure to address the achievement of that objective. OCUA did not recommend anything that would address this issue in its advice regarding the third quinquennium, although OCUA continued to support the objective of eliminating unjustifiable duplication among existing graduate programs as a matter of principle.

OCUA also recommended modest revisions to the program approvals process for the third quinquennium of graduate program planning that involved dropping the program “uniqueness”/justifiable duplication criterion and folding these criteria into its assessment of

745. Council of Ontario Universities, *Brief to the Ontario Council on University Affairs, April 1988*, April 1988, p. 3.

societal need, and requiring that OCUA deem each program to be an “appropriate development within the university system.”⁷⁴⁶ OCUA further recommended that the longstanding ban on new doctoral programs at the emerging universities be lifted, provided that “the primary mission of these institutions [continue to be] the establishment of a rational array of strong, high quality undergraduate program offerings”.⁷⁴⁷ This advice was accepted by the Minister and the shared nature of the responsibility for program coordination and planning was reaffirmed.

5.10.1 *Developments in the Third Quinquennium*

Planning in the context of Ontario's well-established system of universities and programs has consistently displayed two distinct facets - one related to the desirable future development of existing programs, the other to the introduction of new programs in entirely new fields of study.

The graduate planning process was based on improving the overall quality of existing programs, combined with a rational, system-wide approach to the introduction and control of new programs as a means of ensuring the appropriate and controlled development of this sector of the university system. Program closures were to be based on deficient quality as evaluated through a process of peer assessment. But, there was no mechanism to eliminate unjustifiable duplication of existing programs.

The third quinquennium faced the possibility that strategic expansion of graduate

746. Ontario Council on University Affairs, “Advisory Memorandum 89-V, Graduate Program Planning and Funding in the Third Quinquennium 1989-90 to 1993-94”, *Sixteenth Annual Report 1989-90*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, March 1990, pp. 161-162.

747. *Ibid.*, p. 164.

programs might be required in view of a pending need to replace a large cohort of retiring faculty over the decade beginning in the late 1990s. This concern was addressed by strategic changes in the way government used its spending powers. From 1986 to 1991, a targeted funding program was introduced that supported, on a competitive basis, faculty renewal in program areas at particular risk of being adversely affected by disproportionately high levels of retirement at the turn of the century. In 1990, additional *ad hoc* competitively allocated targeted funding was provided to encourage universities to make program adjustments involving joint programming, program closures, program consolidation and rationalization, and the development and expansion of programs in areas of critical need.

By 1991-92, universities and government were largely preoccupied with the fiscal crisis in the province and declining resources for universities. The severity of the financial situation was manifest in the knee-jerk reaction of the newly appointed Minister of Colleges and Universities to program funding. On January 22, 1992, the Honourable Richard Allen announced a program freeze in conjunction with the announcement of the 1992-93 transfer payments. To underline the seriousness of the province's fiscal situation, the Minister wanted no new programs approved for funding.⁷⁴⁸ The universities were under the impression that the Minister intended to maintain the freeze until December 1992 when the Task Force on University Restructuring was expected to report.⁷⁴⁹ This placed OCUA in a very awkward position as it was on the verge of finalizing the submission of new programs resulting from the 1991-92 cycle of program reviews. Subsequent to negotiations between OCUA and the

748. Memorandum from the Honourable Richard Allen, Minister of Colleges and Universities to the Chairs, Boards of Governors, and Executive Heads of the Provincially-assisted Universities, Ryerson, OCA, OISE, Algoma, Nipissing, Hearst and Dominican, January 22, 1992.

749. Letter from Peter George, President, Council of Ontario Universities, to the Honourable Richard Allen, Minister of Colleges and Universities, January 30, 1992.

Minister, and OCUA having pointed out that in a corridor funding system, no additional funds would flow to institutions as a result of the approval of new programs in the short term, on April 1, 1992 the program freeze was lifted for programs already in the approvals process. This was agreed to on the condition that a two stage review of the criteria for program approvals be conducted which would apply to the next cycle of program reviews.⁷⁵⁰ The first stage of the review would involve "a review of procedures and application of criteria...in consultation with the institutions".⁷⁵¹ It was agreed that:

With regard to the long term...as an OCUA quinquennial review of program approvals policy in the graduate area is scheduled for 1993 - at a time when the restructuring exercise would be under way and perhaps showing some indication of direction - that this process be broadened to include all program approval procedures.⁷⁵²

Since the next cycle of program reviews began in August, OCUA moved quickly to consult the universities and complete the first stage of the process which involved a reexamination of the procedures for program approvals, with a view to "making changes that can be implemented in time for the cycle beginning as soon as possible after August 1, 1992."⁷⁵³ OCUA noted that the second stage of the process would involve a more thorough-going review of the criteria and associated procedures in a way "that is linked with the forthcoming scheduled quinquennial review of graduate programs, [due in 1993-94] and coordinated with the development of long-term options to reshape the post-secondary sector in

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750. Letter from the Honourable Richard Allen, Minister of Colleges and Universities, to Viv Nelles, Chair, Ontario Council on University Affairs, April 21, 1992.
751. Letter from H.V. Nelles, Chair, Ontario Council on University Affairs, to Bernard Shapiro, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Colleges and Universities, May 5, 1992, p. 1.
752. *Ibid.*
753. Ontario Council on University Affairs, "Advisory Memorandum 92-V, Program Approvals", *Nineteenth Annual Report, 1992-93*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, September 1993, p. 137.

Ontario proposed by the Minister in January, 1992.”⁷⁵⁴ OCUA argued that it should not review the criteria without thoroughly engaging the stakeholder groups, institutions, and other interested parties, since the criteria “play an important role in shaping the growth and development of the university sector, and provide an important instrument of public accountability.”⁷⁵⁵

This advice was accepted by the Minister on August 11, 1992. Although OCUA held hearings around the issue of program approval criteria in the fall of 1992, the second stage of the review was put on hold in order for OCUA to deal with the more pressing issue of system restructuring and consequent resource allocation. Ultimately, neither the second phase of the review nor the quinquennial review of graduate program planning was undertaken. The objectives and criteria established in the third quinquennium persisted until the demise of OCUA in 1996.

5.11 An Academic Planning Vacuum

One could argue that with the demise of ACAP and the failure of sectoral planning or a comparable process, that a planning vacuum existed at the system level in Ontario. That OCUA provided encouragement to plan was evident, but it clearly lacked authority and failed to achieve consensus on a planning process other than on the margin regarding new program developments. In 1993, OCUA discussed the establishment of a *post-hoc* review of its program approvals process to review its effectiveness in identifying programs for which there was a need and demand. While it had approved programs for over ten years under the current

754. *Ibid.*

755. *Ibid.*

processes and criteria, OCUA had never examined whether the 223 approved programs (of 240 reviewed) had admitted the number of students that had been projected, whether or not graduates were employed in fields or positions for which they were trained, or whether the potential employers who supported the program ever hired any graduates.

OCUA's procedures pertained to only three points in the life of a program: first in infancy, when intent to offer a program is noted on the five year plan (graduate) or annual undergraduate letter on new developments, second, when funding eligibility is sought (and this was typically done prior to the program accepting enrolments), and third, in demise, and at that only at the graduate level when the quality of the program is deemed unacceptable by OCGS, at which point OCUA recommended that the funding for the program be withdrawn. Despite the enormous time and effort that went into the OCGS/ACAP academic planning process and the OCUA program funding approvals process, from the early 1980s the majority of programs existed in isolation from any system-level planning considerations.

OCUA chose not to undertake a *post-hoc* assessment of its program approval process, in part because staff analysis of a random group of graduate programs approved by OCUA since 1984 revealed that actual total enrolment as reported in OCGS Macroindicator Data 1993-94 suggested that these graduate programs had in fact exceeded steady-state enrolment projections made at the time of funding application. While this suggested to OCUA that there was indeed evidence of student demand for graduate programs which had received funding approval, OCUA had no way of knowing whether or not such graduates had found employment in fields related to their program of study, whether employers that had attested to the need for the program had actually hired any program graduates, or whether such findings applied equally to undergraduate program graduates. Disinterest and indifference may explain

the lack of data in a setting where program planning had consistently been a theatre of illusion.

The irrelevance of detailed program planning practices to a system approach that was primarily based on financial incentives and disincentives combined with the prospect of increased participation rates and enrolment growth forced program rationalization concerns to take a back seat to discussions about restructuring for efficiency to accommodate enrolment growth with fewer resources.

5.11.1 *The Role of AAC in Coordination and Planning*

The seven member Academic Advisory Committee (AAC) of OCUA was established by Order in Council, June 30, 1982 in response to recommendations from COU and its committees, which were endorsed by the Fisher and Bovey Commission reports. AAC provided an ongoing source of independent advice to OCUA and, through OCUA to the Minister concerning the public funding of programs in the Ontario university sector. Initially this advice was required only in regard to professional programs and new graduate programs. However, over the years, OCUA sought AAC's advice on the full range of academic programming offered at Ontario universities.

The Academic Advisory Committee was created to perform a function essential to graduate program planning and which could not be performed appropriately by any existing organization. OCUA, with its broad mandate and membership, needed disinterested, yet professional expertise provided by academics from a range of disciplines to inform its decisions regarding the funding of new programs. AAC members were selected from a list, developed by OCGS, of distinguished academics in the discipline areas requiring representation on the Committee.

In addition to applying OCUA's criteria to proposals for program funding eligibility,

AAC was responsible for:

- a) reviewing COU's annual compilation of graduate macro-indicators, and submitting to Council any comments and advice thereon;
- b) annually reviewing the results of appraisals and assessments conducted by COU with a view to the implications for continued funding of any existing graduate program; and
- c) reviewing, generally, and from time to time, the operation and effectiveness of COU's program quality appraisals, and advising Council thereon.

AAC took its accountability responsibilities for OCGS activities very seriously. The two groups met annually to discuss the previous years' appraisals results, to review the workings of the appraisals process to ensure its ability to produce credible and reliable decisions about program quality, and to discuss trends in the development of new graduate programs and graduate program closures. AAC scrutinized changes in OCGS policies pertaining to appraisals and challenged practices which obscured the process or appeared to "lower the threshold" of "good quality" in any way. Although the independent assessment of the OCGS appraisals process undertaken by Stefan Dupré *et al.* had served to reassure AAC that the results of the appraisals process could be trusted,⁷⁵⁶ academics being academics, AAC members had a tendency to second guess OCGS's approval of new graduate programs from time to time, once the programs were submitted to OCUA for funding consideration. Successful appraisal of a program on quality grounds, being as it were the threshold criteria for AAC's review of a program for funding eligibility, meant that there was a keen interest in exacting a high degree of accountability from OCGS on an annual basis. For example, in

756. See Ontario Council on University Affairs, "Advisory Memorandum 86-III, An Assessment of the Council of Ontario Universities' Program Quality Appraisals Process", *Thirteenth Annual Report 1986-87*.

Chapter 5: Coordination and Planning in Ontario: A Focus on Graduate Programming

response to AAC queries in 1992 regarding graduate program restructuring, OCGS undertook a survey of the appraisals process. The ensuing report, *OCGS Appraisals 1982/83 to 1992/93: Programme "Restructuring" at the Graduate Level* revealed that graduate enrolment had increased 24% and 81 new graduate programs were approved during that period while the total number of programs had increased by only 23 or 5% to 475. OCGS concluded that 18% of the graduate programs had been restructured, i.e. deleted, consolidated, or had become joint with another program.⁷⁵⁷ AAC regularly questioned OCGS on substantive issues relating to the by-laws governing appraisals resulting in redefinitions (March 1995); the circumstances surrounding graduate programs that withdrew from the appraisals process (March 1995); transparency of OCGS appraisal process results (November 1991); and the use of letter labels (a,b,c,d) versus words (good quality, good quality with a report, conditionally approved, not approved) for classifying appraised programs (November 1987 and October 1988).

In turn, the Graduate Deans used the annual meetings to convey their concerns to the Academic Advisory Committee about OCUA funding policies and program approval processes. For example, in 1988, OCGS indicated that it was "extremely concerned with the duplication of its standard appraisal process by the OCUA review criteria."⁷⁵⁸ OCGS explained that OCUA's definition of the criteria requiring programs to be consistent with the institutional aims, objectives and existing strengths "extensively" overlapped OCGS considerations of library resources, facilities, collateral strengths, laboratories and space.

In 1996, the issue of streamlining the OCGS appraisals process and OCUA program

757. Ontario Council on Graduate Studies, *OCGS Appraisals 1982/3 to 1992/3: Programme "Restructuring" at the Graduate Level*, Toronto: Council of Ontario Universities, February 1993, p. 1.

758. Staff notes from the AAC/OCGS annual meeting, October 28, 1988.

funding approvals process dominated the agenda. In addition to proposing to end its publication of Macroindicator Data, which by now also contained data with respect to Master's-level programs, OCGS argued that new graduate programs based on the recasting of an existing program, or resulting from the merger of departments be exempt from OCUA approval processes.⁷⁵⁹ After discussing these proposals with OCUA, AAC responded to OCGS by letter, reporting that:

AAC supports the direction of OCGS's efforts to streamline appraisals procedures. AAC notes that some of its comments have been reflected in the OCGS document concerning restructured programs. With respect to OCGS procedures pertaining to programs that have been recast, AAC notes that program changes could be of a magnitude warranting OCUA review on grounds of societal need, student demand and duplication. AAC argues that optimal outcomes for the university system and society result from a delicate balance between the roles of OCGS and OCUA/AAC. With respect to the issue of recasting programs, AAC feels that this new balance proposed by OCGS may tip too far in the direction of institutionally-specific concerns at the expense of system-level issues. Further discussion between OCUA/AAC and OCGS in this regard is recommended.⁷⁶⁰

This "delicate balance" and AAC's oversight role were important to the integrity of the OCGS appraisals process.

The degree to which perceptions about the workings of the checks and balances inherent in the OCUA/AAC and COU/OCGS relationship were important is illustrated by the fact that upon learning of the closure of OCUA and AAC, some university Vice-Presidents began raising the issue of the cost of the OCGS process and whether or not quality appraisals were really necessary.⁷⁶¹

759. Ontario Council on Graduate Studies, "Program Restructuring", Agenda Item 9601/5(b), January 19, 1996.

760. Letter from Sandra Olney, Chair, Academic Advisory Committee, to Nicole Bégin-Heick, Executive Director, Ontario Council on Graduate Studies, April 9, 1996.

761. This fact was gleaned from a personal conversation with an employee of the Council of Ontario Universities and was confirmed by a Dean of Graduate Studies of an Ontario university.

5.11.2 AAC Discussion Papers 1988 - 1992

During the annual AAC/OCGS meeting of 1988, OCGS indicated that in an attempt to make better use of the system-wide knowledge of disciplines residing in the Appraisal Committees (which reviewed graduate program quality on a discipline by discipline basis) it had decided to produce a series of papers containing comments and observations about specific disciplines arising from the appraisal of graduate programs within the Ontario university system conducted between 1984 and 1986.⁷⁶² The comments and observations presented in these reports, AAC was told, would be of a general nature, for the consideration of those responsible for graduate work and were planning documents in an indicative rather than prescriptive sense. However, they would point to matters that OCGS believed should be discussed within universities. OCGS noted that there were planning issues that arose from the contents of the report but emphasis on such issues had to be “watered down” substantially before such reports could be released publicly. OCGS indicated that the universities resisted planning and direction from OCGS and didn’t want OCGS to tell the universities what to do even though OCGS was charged by COU to make planning recommendations.⁷⁶³ With the encouragement of OCGS, and OCUA approval in December 1988 along with a guarantee of additional staff resources, AAC agreed to select certain disciplines for further study. The disciplines AAC selected were directly related to concerns discussed at the 1989 AAC-OCGS meeting.

The proposed reports were intended to:

provide OCUA, and at OCUA’s discretion, the Minister and the public, with a detailed analysis of the strengths and weakness of the current array of graduate

762. See for example Ontario Council on Graduate Studies of the Council of Ontario Universities, *Modern Language Disciplines: Some Comments and Observations from Appraisals*, Toronto: The Council, August 14, 1988.

763. Personal notes from the AAC-OCGS meeting of May 5, 1989, discussion of “Discipline Reports”, p. 5.

programs in the Ontario university system on a discipline by discipline basis which will assist in the Council's assessment of corridor shift negotiations and will assist AAC and OCUA in the evaluation of new graduate programs for which funding eligibility is requested.⁷⁶⁴

Secondary objectives included the identification of program areas requiring consolidation on grounds of poor quality or unjustifiable duplication, program areas or fields within programs requiring expansion, areas of program excellence, and "to identify the needs of the Ontario university system with respect to the future complexion of the graduate enterprise in Ontario".⁷⁶⁵

That systematic academic planning was not an OCUA priority was reflected in OCUA's unwillingness to provide AAC with additional staff support. This initially delayed preparation of the planning-related discussion papers. As the Chair of AAC noted, in a letter of December 11, 1989:

The Academic Advisory Committee (AAC) has asked me to write to you once again about the urgent need for additional staff resources to be allocated to the Committee. These resources are especially important in respect of the Committee's responsibility for the preparation of a series of discussion papers....

When the AAC met today with the Executive members of the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies, it was clear that the OCGS was very anxious that we prepare these discussion papers; they were very disappointed that we were unable to report any progress. Frankly, it was embarrassing for the AAC members to admit that work on these papers had not even begun. In view of this, the OCGS members wondered how we could effectively fulfill our additional responsibilities for reviewing undergraduate programs and the universities' five-year plans. We share this concern.⁷⁶⁶

Shortly thereafter, the AAC staff complement was increased from one to two.⁷⁶⁷ In

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764. Academic Advisory Committee, "Notes for Discussion of AAC's Role in the Development of Papers Based on OCGS Discipline Reports", May 4, 1989.
765. *Ibid.*
766. Letter from Kenneth Kernaghan, Chair, Academic Advisory Committee, to H.V. Nelles, Chair, Ontario Council on University Affairs, December 11, 1989.
767. Support for the work of the Academic Advisory Committee was provided by OCUA research staff. The author was the primary research officer for AAC from 1985 to 1996. A research assistant was assigned to the Committee to assist them in producing their discussion papers.

March 1991, AAC produced *Toward a Foreign Language Dimension in University Education*. In execution, AAC felt that the undertaking required an approach that also included the undergraduate enterprise. AAC subsequently reviewed all programs and courses currently offered, economic data and demographic and immigration data. This information was linked to the array of modern language programs currently available and the potential increases needed in relation to projected societal needs. AAC identified program areas where existing programs were sufficient to meet future needs (e.g. German, Spanish), program areas where additional programs were warranted (e.g. Arabic, Japanese, Chinese [Mandarin], Korean) and the need for modern language programs to become more accessible to students majoring in programs within other departments and to strengthen their service orientation to other disciplines. Institutional responses to the paper were reviewed by AAC and it was clear that the paper served to confirm trends that had been perceived by a number of institutions and to provide a system-level perspective of the implications of changes to modern language programs contemplated in individual institutions.

The second and final AAC discussion paper, *Professional Bodies and University Education* (July 1993), was a joint undertaking of AAC and OCUA. Although the recommendations in the paper were AAC's alone, the work of the Academic Advisory Committee in developing the paper was assisted by OCUA holding a public hearing on the subject in Ottawa on October 31, 1991. This hearing brought together university representatives and representatives of professional organizations representing accountancy, nursing, education, architecture, engineering and speech pathology and audiology. Three issues were discussed: the influence of the professions on university curricula; consultative mechanisms between the professions and the university; and continuing education/continued

competence education.⁷⁶⁸ A survey of various professions was also conducted. The resultant AAC paper stands as the first document to define and summarize the features of professional programs offered in Ontario at a system-level and to critically assess the influence of the professional bodies on curricular content across all professional program areas. From a planning perspective, AAC raised particular concerns about the development of five-year undergraduate programs and the associated additional costs this practice incurs. AAC recommended that: “rationalization of curriculum or a higher level of abstraction in course content should be explored as means of incorporating more elements into curricula without increasing the number of courses or program length.”⁷⁶⁹

Due to OCUA’s commitment to direct its staff toward the work of the University Restructuring Steering Committee, staff resources for future AAC discussion papers were not made available. Thus, another opportunity for enhanced academic coordination at the system-level was lost. As former Executive Director of OCGS, Maurice Yeates concluded:

AAC failed to grasp the torch OCGS was passing on to [it]. This represents a failure. We were trying to put something together that [AAC] could use and [AAC]...never got to it. That was because AAC wasn’t set up to do it and ...because no one ever wanted...any serious planning....all they were really doing was throwing bones and when too many bones were thrown, one way of controlling [AAC] was simply not to give enough resources to handle it.⁷⁷⁰

5.11.3 Five-Year Graduate Plans

OCUA’s expansion of AAC’s responsibilities was not limited to the production of discussion papers on discipline planning matters. In 1989, OCUA’s Program Committee

768. Ontario Council on University Affairs, “Summary Notes from Public Hearing with the Professions October 31, 1991”, November 1991.

769. Academic Advisory Committee, *Professional Bodies and University Education*, July 1993, p. 20.

770. Interview with Maurice Yeates, April 15, 1997.

delegated its responsibility to AAC for the review of quasi-professional and special programs for funding eligibility and the annual review of institutional five-year graduate program plans.

As OCUA noted with respect to five-year plans:

Council believes that AAC's experience in the area of graduate program approvals, and familiarity with the COU Macroindicator data and OCGS appraisals results gives AAC particularly relevant experience on which to provide advice to Council about the appropriateness of five-year graduate plans. Council will refer the five-year graduate plans to AAC on an annual basis for advice thereon. Council will review AAC's advice and subsequently provide comments to the institutions with respect to their five-year plans.⁷⁷¹

OCUA's practice of requiring five-year graduate plans had its origins in 1979 during discussions of the ACAP and COU role in advising OCUA on the eligibility of graduate programs for funding against OCUA's criteria of need, justifiable duplication, quality, student enrolment, institutional appropriateness and consistency with the aims, objectives and existing strengths of the institution.⁷⁷² While COU had not responded to the issue of institutional appropriateness on the grounds that it was premature in view of upcoming OCUA hearings on institutional role differentiation, it suggested that universities would find it helpful to have OCUA's reaction to new graduate programs when they first appeared in each institution's plans in order that institutions could avoid committing resources to a program which had little likelihood of receiving funding approval. OCUA's comments on the institutional five-year graduate plans were first provided in mid-February, 1980. Updated institutional plans and OCUA responses were provided annually thereafter.⁷⁷³ For graduate programs, inclusion in

771. Ontario Council on University Affairs, "Advisory Memorandum 89-V, Graduate Program Planning and Funding in the Third Quinquennium 1989-90 to 1993-94", *Sixteenth Annual Report 1989-90*, Toronto: Ministry of Colleges and Universities, March 1990, p. 162.

772. Letter from W.C. Winegard, Chair, Ontario Council on University Affairs to E.J. Monahan, Executive Director, Council of Ontario Universities, October 30, 1979.

773. Letter from W.C. Winegard, Chair, Ontario Council on University Affairs, to R.L. Watts, Chair, Council of Ontario Universities, February 15, 1980.

the institution's five-year plan, as registered with OCUA, also became a requirement for funding eligibility.

While the process was not based on a centrally planned vision of where graduate program developments should or should not occur, it initially acted as an early-warning system which provided each university with OCUA's opinion regarding the general appropriateness of future graduate program development plans. OCUA noted:

In some cases, a review of individual five-year plans may reveal aspirations which are conflicting or duplicative in a system context. Council will attempt to provide each institution with information regarding similar program aspirations at other institutions as well as to comment on the apparent institutional appropriateness of each program. ...A positive signal from Council with respect to a program included in the five-year plan is not, however, a guarantee of approval for funding eligibility.⁷⁷⁴

As institutions faced ever more stringent fiscal circumstances, institutional academic planning became an increasingly important internal requirement. At the same time, OCUA's entire approach to approving new programs for funding eligibility became more regulatory in nature and less connected to broader planning issues. While still serving to inform other institutions of the proposed new programs system-wide, the OCUA five-year graduate program planning process came to be viewed as an institutional shopping list that acted as an insurance policy for the institutions, ensuring new programs access to funding eligibility should they come forward to OCUA at a future date. By the early 1990s, OCUA comments on five-year plans served largely to confirm for universities what they already knew about their competition in the graduate program sphere. Hence, the OCUA five-year graduate planning process was, from an institutional perspective, an annual inconvenience rather than an "aid to institutions

774. Ontario Council on University Affairs, "Advisory Memorandum 89-V...", *op. cit.*, p. 163.

in their planning”.

In the spring of 1996, OCUA requested that OCGS undertake an e-mail survey of the Graduate Deans views about whether or not there was in fact any “value-added” component to the OCUA five-year planning process, and whether the Deans would lose any leverage or influence with their departments, or a planning tool, if the requirement for filing an annual five-year plan disappeared. The reaction of the graduate deans was typified by the following response:

I do not find that the Five Year Plan provides any value added nor does it function as a planning tool. The planning takes place elsewhere, and the Five Year Plan summarizes planning that has already occurred. From the point of view of the University itself, I can foresee no down side to eliminating the requirement to file this plan.⁷⁷⁵

OCUA subsequently decided to eliminate the five-year graduate plan process and simply ask institutions to list annually any new program developments pertaining to the coming academic year. At the same time, at the urging of AAC, OCUA moved to improve the overall comprehensiveness of the information institutions were required to submit in regard to all academic programs. As OCUA noted in its subsequent letter to the institutions:

A new item of information has become vitally important in the current climate of fiscal contraction. It has been eloquently brought to my attention that senior levels of this Government are expressing a more than casual interest in the matter of program mergers and terminations. Accordingly, please list for 1996-97 any programs to which you are ceasing to admit students, which you plan to close or which you plan to merge either with an existing program in your institution or a sister institution.⁷⁷⁶

That this request would mark the first time that OCUA had ever systematically requested

775. E-mail forwarded by OCGS to the author at OCUA, originating from a graduate dean of an Ontario university, February 2, 1996.

776. Letter from J. Stefan Dupré, Chair, Ontario Council on University Affairs, to the Executive Heads of Ontario Universities, and COU, April 24, 1996.

information on anything other than new graduate program developments attests to the sheer lack of decision support information that OCUA possessed, and underlines the degree to which the use of the word “planning” to describe OCUA’s activities in the graduate program area was a misnomer.

5.12 The Ministry’s Role in Program Coordination and Planning in the 1990s

In a break with past tradition of broad consultation with the university system, usually facilitated by the Ontario Council on University Affairs, in the 1990s, the government moved, unilaterally in some cases, to address a number of issues pertaining to the future development of the Ontario university system. These issues took two forms: (1) those provoked by the severe and sudden fiscal constraints facing universities which triggered “crises” peculiar to individual institutions that were dealt with directly by the Minister without system consultation or the advice of OCUA; and (2) shifts in government policy with respect to the array of publicly-assisted university-level institutions made without system consultation or OCUA advice, or in complete disregard of OCUA advice where it was sought.

In 1993, then Minister of Education and Training, Dave Cooke was travelling around the province telling the universities that they “needed to put their houses in order...be more innovative...and imaginative”⁷⁷⁷ in dealing with the environment of fiscal constraint. In 1993, the University of Western Ontario proposed to close its School of Journalism, whereby some faculty would be transferred to Carleton University’s Journalism program and others would be bridged to retirement. The Minister had indicated informally to the University of Western

777. Interview with Charles Pascal, April 15, 1997.

Ontario that the Ministry would “look favourably on [a request for transition support] if both...Senates approved it”⁷⁷⁸ The proposal to close Western’s School of Journalism received approved from its academic Senate in September 1993, but the decision was subsequently reversed one month later by a margin of one vote by the University’s Board of Governors, whose members had been subject to intense lobbying by former graduates of the School.⁷⁷⁹ Despite the prospect of transitional aid from public coffers, the failure of the university to close the program served to reinforce how difficult and politicized such decisions can be when the exercise of institutional self-denial is involved.

Two other examples of direct institutional negotiations with the Minister on program-related matters involved agreements with the University of Toronto to cap enrolments in Medicine (1993) and with Toronto and the University of Western Ontario to deregulate tuition fees in Dentistry programs (1996). The University of Toronto Undergraduate Medicine Agreement specified that the operating grant revenue that the University of Toronto would have lost by reducing its first year medical program enrolment by approximately 75 students per year, would be paid to it in the equivalent amount, for a period of 15 years through a “Special Health Research Grant” that was specifically exempt from review by the Ontario Council on University Affairs.⁷⁸⁰ This agreement reflected the government’s interest in reducing the number of medical doctors produced by the universities and the university faculty’s willingness to trade off research funding for students.

With respect to Dentistry programs, an agreement negotiated with the Minister allowed

778. *Ibid.*

779. *Ibid.*

780. *Undergraduate Medicine Agreement Between the Minister of Education and Training and The Governing Council of the University of Toronto*, June 23, 1993.

the Universities of Toronto and Western Ontario to increase domestic student tuition fees from \$4,000 a year to \$8,000 a year. Intake into first year dentistry programs at the two institutions totalled roughly 100 students. *Globe and Mail* reporter Jennifer Lewington noted that

the...increase is a special deal between the government and the two universities. As part of the agreement, the Council of Ontario Universities, which represents 19 institutions, pledged not to go back to the government this year with special requests for fee increases in other programs.⁷⁸¹

In addition, the two universities indicated that they intended to offer a "side-by-side" dentistry program to which foreign students would be admitted, in order to utilize excess program capacity. International students would be charged a fee of no less than \$17,500 according to the information that the universities provided to the Minister of Education and Training.⁷⁸²

These cases suggest that in the case of Medicine, institutional self-denial can be successfully undertaken where there is no cost to the institution and that, with respect to Dentistry, the COU is prepared to negotiate away the interests of the many on behalf of the powerful minority among its members.

With respect to macro-planning decisions, or questions which would arise in the context of system master planning, the then Minister of Colleges and Universities, Lyn McLeod asked the Ontario Council on University Affairs in 1988 to advise her on a request made by Nipissing College, an affiliate of Laurentian University, regarding legislation that would grant it independent degree-granting status. This request was followed in the spring of 1991 by a request from Minister of Colleges and Universities, Richard Allen, for advice on changing the status of Ryerson Polytechnical Institute to that of a polytechnic university.

781. Jennifer Lewington, "Tuition fees to double at Ontario dental schools," *Globe and Mail*, Friday March 15, 1996.

782. *Ibid.*

OCUA responded by submitting three separate but interrelated pieces of advice, the first addressing the broad policy issues with respect to planning and coordinating the expansion of the number of publicly-assisted degree-granting institutions, and the other two addressing each of the specific institutions under review. OCUA ultimately recommended that both institutions undergo a quality appraisal, and that they should be considered for university status with limited missions if found to demonstrate appropriate program quality and if possessing the appropriate university characteristics in terms of organization and governance.

Minister Richard Allen declined to accept the central principle of institutional quality assessment upon which the advice rested, partially in recognition of the time-consuming nature of the associated processes. By virtue of a Private Member's Bill, in December 1992, Nipissing was transformed into a university with a "special" teaching-oriented mission restricted to education and liberal arts and sciences.⁷⁸³ Its polytechnic counterpart was delivered just six months later, with Royal Assent being granted to *An Act to amend the Ryerson Polytechnical Institute Act, 1977*, assented to on June 1, 1993, which involved repealing and renaming *The Ryerson Polytechnical Institute Act, 1977* as the *Ryerson Polytechnic University Act, 1977*. Additional amendments provided the institution with university powers limited to granting degrees in areas of "applied knowledge and research".⁷⁸⁴

Again in 1994, the Minister responsible for universities adopted an *ad hoc* solution to the issue of institutional development, this time concerning the complete integration of the University of Toronto's affiliate, the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), with

783. Government of Ontario, *Bill Pr70, (Chapter Pr52 Statutes of Ontario, 1992) An Act Respecting Nipissing University*, Royal Assent December 10, 1992.

784. Government of Ontario, *An Act to amend The Ryerson Polytechnical Institute Act, 1977*, Royal Assent, June 1, 1993.

the University's Faculty of Education. OISE was straining financially under the weight of a 12% rolling deficit. By 1995, a complete merger had been approved by the Honourable Dave Cooke with significant involvement of his then Deputy Minister, Charles Pascal, which fully integrated the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education with the University of Toronto.

In view of the complete absence of any ongoing master planning activity on the part of the Ministry responsible for universities, the advisory body OCUA, or the university collectivity, combined with the complexity of engaging in a timely planning process when little system data are readily available, it is inevitable, and largely unavoidable that *ad hoc* decisions are made when and where such issues present themselves. One must acknowledge, however, that even within the context of a master plan, *ad hoc* decisions could and probably would be made from time to time.

5.13 OCUA's Role in Program Coordination and Planning in the 1990s

With the introduction of the *Social Contract*, the effective demise of the University Restructuring Steering Committee and the Minister's subsequent request for a wide ranging review of the system of funding Ontario universities (the Resource Allocation Review), OCUA staff could undertake only the most minimal program-related work for a two year period beginning in late 1993. Subsequent to the completion of the advice on resource allocation for Ontario universities in 1995, and the realization that its recommendations for an enhanced role in central planning and coordination for OCUA would not be implemented, OCUA returned to the issue of its existing program planning and approvals processes. OCUA began considering how it could streamline its program funding processes and minimize AAC's role in order to facilitate program rationalization efforts on the part of the universities.

Chapter 5: Coordination and Planning in Ontario: A Focus on Graduate Programming

Renewed interest in program rationalization and restructuring had been triggered by the November 29, 1995 *Fiscal and Economic Statement* of the Minister of Finance announcing a 15% reduction in provincial transfer payments to universities for 1996-97. At the time of the announcement, the Minister had under consideration undergraduate and graduate program funding advice from OCUA involving 25 new or restructured programs which had been recommended for funding eligibility. The Minister was not prepared to assume that the universities, in light of the 15% reduction in funds, would wish to continue to offer these programs. OCUA undertook a verification process with each institution, and concluded that institutions were fully prepared to offer the programs despite the funding reduction.

The Minister accepted OCUA's advice by letter of February 19, 1996, but noted that "in light of the changing fiscal environment, it will be important that future programs be assessed under criteria that promote sector-wide planning and coordination."⁷⁸⁵ In addition, the Minister requested advice on a streamlined program approvals process by May 15, 1996.

In a meeting with the Academic Advisory Committee, November 17, 1995, Interim Chair, J. Stefan Dupré, raised concerns regarding real and perceived barriers to program restructuring and institutional flexibility created by the OCUA program approvals process. The universities had become more vocal in expressing their view that streamlining the program funding approvals process was crucial in the current environment. Since the late 1980s the institutions individually and through COU and OCGS had been complaining that the program approvals process was duplicating existing institutional and OCGS processes, was too bureaucratic and was overly regulatory. In addition, President of McMaster University, Peter

785. Letter from the Honourable John C. Snobelen, Minister of Education and Training, to Dr. J. Stefan Dupré, Interim Chair, Ontario Council on University Affairs, February 19, 1996.

George, observed: “[The process] was slow, [as was] the time it took the Ministry to respond.”⁷⁸⁶ Streamlining the program funding approval process came to be seen as urgent, particularly in light of fiscal contraction and the uncertainty surrounding enrolment levels and faculty retirements. As Peter George noted:

As funding restrictions grew, pressure to look for some quick fixes increased, and the [approval] system wasn’t adaptable enough to move more quickly in response to the kind of urgency people felt. There was more program restructuring in response to internal fiscal pressures...there was just a growing sense of anxiety and urgency.⁷⁸⁷

For a number of years, some institutions had advocated the elimination of the OCUA review process for graduate programs, arguing that the OCGS appraisal process was sufficient in an environment of fiscal constraint. The Academic Advisory Committee had provided OCUA with annual reports which substantiated the maturity of the system and the sobering effects of fiscal constraint on academic ambitions. In 1994, AAC noted “a significant reduction in the number of undergraduate programs submitted ...for funding eligibility review...”⁷⁸⁸ and that the majority of programs were “products of academic restructuring which has occurred within particular departments...”⁷⁸⁹ resulting in a large number of cursory reviews. This observation was repeated in June 1995 and in addition, at that time, it was noted that:

[N]ew programs ...involved: refurbishing existing programs in order to better meet societal needs...; building upon institutional academic strengths, often via intra and interdisciplinary programming...; exploiting institutional mission to respond to regional needs...; and amalgamation of programs to strengthen

786. Interview with Peter George, April 9, 1997.

787. *Ibid.*

788. Letter from Sandra Olney, Chair, Academic Advisory Committee, to Joy Cohnstaedt, Chair, Ontario Council on University Affairs, January 21, 1994.

789. *Ibid.*

programs without requiring additional public resources...

For the most part, additional funding has been found through internal restructuring, private benefaction, or competitively adjudicated funding sources. ...[T]he expansion of the range of institutions offering doctoral programs is happening in a constrained way, forcing institutions to identify their own strengths as well as regional needs and innovative modes of program delivery and design.⁷⁹⁰

By 1996, AAC was reporting that the harsh fiscal climate appeared to be generating remarkable examples of program rationalization and restructuring within existing resources including a new Bachelor's of Fine Arts program at the University of Ottawa resulting from the consolidation of three previously existing programs which led to the elimination of 50 courses within the department; and the introduction of two new Engineering programs at McMaster University which were products of a rationalization and restructuring effort by the Faculty of Engineering that involved the closure of six existing Engineering programs.⁷⁹¹

The number of programs submitted for review over the past five years had clearly been declining, and the programs submitted were increasingly based upon existing approved programs that had been restructured or rationalized. Fewer programs were being created *de novo*. The newly elected government, which had publicly committed to the elimination of counterproductive regulations, expected a new process which presumed a much more limited government role. Yet despite signs that fiscal constraint was facilitating the rationalization and planning that had for so many years remained an elusive OCUA objective, AAC reaffirmed a need for OCUA to maintain its role in reviewing proposed new programs arguing

790. Letter from Sandra Olney, Chair, Academic Advisory Committee, to Joy Cohnstaedt, Chair, Ontario Council on University Affairs, June 6, 1995.

791. Letter from Sandra Olney, Chair, Academic Advisory Committee, to Stefan Dupré, Chair, Ontario Council on University Affairs, January 30, 1996.

that the process “protects the public interest while assuring the integrity of academic offerings in the province.”⁷⁹²

After consultation with the Academic Advisory Committee, and with COU, on May 14, 1996, OCUA submitted what would be its final advice to the Minister prior to being abolished. Advisory Memorandum 96-1 “Streamlining the Program Funding Approvals Process” was informed by the objectives of the program approvals process in Ontario as derived from practice, which included:

1. The assurance of truth-in-advertising (consistency among program name, degree designation and course content).
2. The assurance of an appropriate threshold level of academic quality.
3. The assurance of efficient use of public funds.
4. The assurance of effective use of public funds in relation to society’s needs.
5. The prevention of unjustifiable duplication.
6. The assurance of institutional role differentiation.⁷⁹³

Although the OCUA recommendations would have significantly streamlined the process of review required of rationalized and restructured programs, fifteen days after the advice was submitted, it was announced that OCUA was to be abolished and the Academic Advisory Committee along with it. The advice never received Ministerial response.

With the elimination of OCUA and AAC, responsibilities for program funding approval reverted to the Ministry, and on November 8, 1996, Assistant Deputy Minister,

792. Letter from Sandra Olney, Chair, Academic Advisory Committee to Stefan Dupré, Chair, Ontario Council on University Affairs, January 8, 1996, pp. 1-2.

793. Academic Advisory Committee, “Consolidated Objectives of the Program Approvals Process Derived from Practice”, April, 1996.

Postsecondary Division, David Trick, advised the university community of the establishment of an “interim process of self-administered regulation [that] will replace the current program approvals process for the 1996-97 academic year.”⁷⁹⁴

While largely based on the OCUA streamlining advice, it differed in a significant way - the Executive head of each institution was required to attest that the Senate and governing body had certified that the criteria of “truth-in-advertising”/nomenclature, quality, financial viability, consistency with institutional aims, objectives and strengths, student demand and societal need had been met. There would be no system-level input required on any criterion, with the exception of quality, which for graduate programs, would be addressed by OCGS and, eventually, for undergraduate programs by the COU Undergraduate Program Review Audit Committee that had been proposed and agreed to in 1994, but which had only just been established in 1996 and had not yet undertaken any reviews. The Ministry reserved for itself evaluation of the seventh and final criterion which required: “Convincing evidence that any duplicative similarities to existing programs in Ontario or Canada are justifiable for reasons of public funding.”⁷⁹⁵

5.14 Conclusions

From 1965 to 1996, the Ontario government and its advisory bodies CUA and later OCUA had attempted, in a variety of ways, to guide the expansion and development of the graduate enterprise sometimes by direct intervention through the establishment of particular

794. Memorandum from David Trick, Assistant Deputy Minister, Postsecondary Education Division, Ministry of Education and Training, to Executive Heads of Provincially-Assisted Universities, OCA, Algoma and Hearst, November 8, 1996, p. 1.

795. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

Chapter 5: Coordination and Planning in Ontario: A Focus on Graduate Programming

funding and planning policies, and sometimes by indirect influence, including the enunciation of system-level objectives. Universities were encouraged to act in certain ways to avoid the perceived alternative of imminent government involvement. With the stroke of a pen, the system-wide planning and coordination structures and functions which had evolved, often with great difficulty and at great expense, since the 1960s are now largely gone. The delicate balance that had evolved among OCUA, AAC, OGCS and the appraisals process is no more. A new foundation for government-university relations in Ontario is evolving that is much more consistent with the nature of government-university relations experienced during the early 1960s. The new program approvals process has eliminated much of the emphasis on collective coordination and planning. It continues to utilize OCGS's quality appraisal process as a threshold criterion for eligibility for public funding and will eventually link undergraduate program funding to the new COU process of program quality audits. Conceived as it was, in the context of a deregulatory approach to policy advocated by the Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education, the presently evolving framework for government-university relations will make the development of arrangements for system level academic coordination and planning even more elusive than it has been to date. Yet in a strange twist, perhaps the objectives underlying the government's thirty year effort to achieve academic coordination and planning at a system level will now give way to an alternative discipline imposed on universities by competition and fiscal contraction in an uncertain environment. History suggests, however, that the totality of individual decisions of autonomous institutions acting in their own best interest may not be a guarantee that the decisions taken will reflect society's overall needs.

As provincial and federal governments increase their efforts to utilize higher education

and university research as an element of economic development policy, there will continue to be conflicting pressures on the graduate enterprise. Graduate schools will be required to expand their enrolments in certain fields of research and teaching; contract in others; mount and dismantle joint programs and always doing so in a fiscally responsible manner whether public resources are contracting or expanding.

The difficulty of responding to these conflicting demands to the satisfaction of the government, the universities and the public will ensure that graduate program planning in Ontario will continue to be a responsibility of significant importance to the universities, collectively and individually. With the demise of OCUA and AAC in August 1996, what is not yet clear is how the balance of responsibility for program coordination, planning and accountability will be shared between the institutions and the government.

While the historical record demonstrates clearly that institutions, individually and collectively, were ultimately unwilling to make public judgements on matters of institutional role differentiation which would restrict their potential for new program development in a system context, the universities will accept restrictions on program development based on peer adjudicated assessments of academic quality. The Ontario government's objective in the 1980s, to see the universities become self-regulating to the greatest degree in academic matters, has largely been realized. The Ontario university system is now mature, and relations with government are on a new footing, with no intermediary committee, agency or advisor for the first time since the 1950s.

Government appears satisfied to use its spending power and funding policies to control program proliferation or expansion and encourage or discourage program enrolment growth. However, only time will tell if the universities have learned from the lessons of the past

regarding how, to paraphrase J.A. Corry, to “order their affairs in a reasonable way” or whether they will be destined to repeat their predecessors’ mistakes with the result that society, as W.G. Davis put it in 1966, “will inevitably...demand...that government move in and take over.”

Table 1 provides an overview of the various types of planning which have been used or proposed in Ontario since the 1960s. Yeates indicates that there are four general types of academic planning models used in North America: ameliorative problem-solving, allocative trend-modifying, exploitive opportunity-seeking and normative goal-oriented.⁷⁹⁶ These four models are defined as follows:

1. Ameliorative Problem-Solving

This is the simplest and most usual approach to planning. It can be thought of as “planning for the present”. Nothing is done until problems arising from the dynamics of change in the environment reach a crisis. Then, a course of action is devised to address the defined problem and resources are allocated accordingly. Yeates suggests that this model cannot provide “good planning” because it can achieve little more than a haphazard modification of future development.

2. Allocative Trend-Modifying

This is the future version of planning for the present. It is based on a projection of existing trends, and a forecast of the problems that may result. Mechanisms are then devised to avoid future problems, but little is done to change the context in which the

796. Maurice Yeates, Executive Director of the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies, “Programme Planning Models and the Current Situation in Ontario”, unpublished discussion paper presented at the Millcroft Inn, OCGS Conference on Graduate Planning, April 23, 1987, pp. 3 - 4.

problems are occurring.

3. Exploitive Opportunity-Seeking

This is an extension of the trend-modifying approach. The main objective is to make the most of the future by capitalizing on existing trends. Analyses are not made to identify future problems, but future opportunities, and resources are allocated so as to take advantage of what is expected to happen.

4. Normative Goal-Oriented

This approach is predicated upon the establishment of goals that are set in accordance with the kind of future that is desired and the ways in which the trends in external factors may modify the future. Policies are designed with respect to these goals. Programs are introduced that take into account the projected trends and guide the university enterprise toward specific goals.⁷⁹⁷

Master planning, at the university system level, can be most effective utilizing the normative goal-oriented approach. However, it has been demonstrated that the government of Ontario has been reluctant to become directly involved in the coordination and planning of the university system. While placing significant emphasis upon the coordination and planning of the graduate enterprise, the government has avoided significant direct intervention, preferring to enunciate objectives it wishes to see achieved and allowing the universities themselves to

797. *Ibid.*

Chapter 5: Coordination and Planning in Ontario: A Focus on Graduate Programming

create *ad hoc* responses. As a result, the first elements of system-wide graduate planning in Ontario resulted from joint government-university initiatives, based on the ameliorative problem-solving model, and did not correspond to a centralized master-plan for the development of graduate programming in Ontario. The historical record clearly illustrates that the emphasis in Ontario over the past fifty years has been on less interventionist planning approaches including ameliorative problem-solving, which typically involves a sense of urgency or the perception of a crisis, and allocative trend-modifying, which is typically designed to avoid future problems based on the projection of existing trends but makes no effort to change the context in which problems may occur.

Table 1
Types of Planning in Ontario from the 1960s to the 1990s

Least Interventionist < -----> Most Interventionist

Types of Planning:	Ameliorative Problem-Solving	Allocative Trend-Modifying	Exploitive Opportunity-Seeking	Normative Goal-Oriented	
1960s	Establishment of New Universities	OCGS Standard Appraisals	OCUA Sectoral Planning (not implemented)	ACAP	
1970s					
1980s					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OCGS Periodic Appraisals • OCUA Graduate program funding criteria and 5-year plans • OCUA Undergraduate program funding criteria
1990s					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journalism Western • U of T Medicine Agreement • U of T/Western Dentistry Agreement • Nipissing University • Ryerson Polytechnic University • OISE/U of T Merger

Chapter 6: Analysis and Conclusions

6.1 Trends in Recommendations and Advice with Respect to Coordination and Planning of the Ontario University System

An overview of the various recommendations and initiatives related to system-wide coordination and planning from 1945 to 1996 reveals an ongoing struggle within the province of Ontario to find structures, instruments, mechanisms and policies that ensure a) the efficient and effective use of the public resources provided to the university sector and b) university responsiveness to the needs of society, coupled with a considerable degree of institutional autonomy in terms of financial management and academic development. Table 2 provides a listing of the commissions, reports and initiatives included in this review, and a brief summary of their major observations or recommendations with respect to system coordination and planning.

Throughout the 1950s and 60s, the national and provincial emphasis on university expansion spawned a series of technical advisors and advisory committees in Ontario, intended to assist the Ontario government in financing the expansion of the publicly assisted university sector. By the late 1960s, there was a general recognition of the need for a formal provincial body with a mix of community and university representation to coordinate and plan university policies and university development. Throughout this period, universities established their own formal collective structures and undertook, through them, to assume a high degree of collective responsibility for the development of the sector.

Throughout the 1960s and early 1970s a series of external advisors recommended the introduction of more systematic coordination and planning of university development and the introduction of policies facilitating coordination and planned growth of research and academic

Table 2

COMMISSIONS, REPORTS AND/OR INITIATIVES RELATED TO UNIVERSITY-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, COORDINATION AND PLANNING IN ONTARIO UNDERTAKEN SINCE 1945

Year	Commissions, Reports, and/or Initiatives	Agency or Government Sponsor	Central Observations or Recommendations with respect to Coordination and Planning
1951	Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences (Massey-Levesque Commission)	Federal Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that the Federal government make direct annual contributions to support the expanding work of the universities
1958	Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects (Gordon Commission)	Federal Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve and expand universities to improve and expand the national economy
1962	<i>Post-Secondary Education in Ontario, 1962-70</i> (Deutsch Report)	Committee of Presidents of Provincially-assisted Universities of Ontario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significantly expand the size and number of Ontario universities and encourage growth in graduate studies
1964	Royal Commission on Health Services (Hall Commission)	Federal Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that the Federal government provide financial support for the expansion of university programs in medicine, dentistry and nursing
1964	First Annual Review: <i>Economic Goals for Canada to 1970</i>	Economic Council of Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a high standard of living and high-employment economy required a "high-education" economy
1965	Second Annual Review: <i>Towards Sustained and Balanced Economic Growth</i>	Economic Council of Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "returns on the human investment" in high school and university education are in the range of 15 to 20 per cent • investment in education should be the highest priority in policy-making
1965	<i>Financing Higher Education in Canada</i> (Bladen Commission)	AUCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expansion of university programs and services is essential to national prosperity • provinces should establish funding formulas and "Grants Commissions" to manage financial allocations to universities
1966	Commission to Study the Development of Graduate Programmes in Ontario Universities (Spinks Commission)	Government of Ontario/Committee of Presidents of Provincially-assisted Universities of Ontario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • restrict doctoral programs to a few universities • research and library resources should be allocated according to a system-wide plan • create a "state" university system - University of Ontario to constrain competition and "ill-advised" expansion
1967	<i>University Government in Canada</i> (Duff, Berdahl Commission)	AUCC and CAUT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formal bodies needed to coordinate university policies within provinces • universities must co-ordinate responses to public need to ensure that proposed programmes are appropriate to their standards and rationally distributed among the institutions of higher education • universities' independence of governmental control lies in their ability to take united stands based on objective studies undertaken by a formal coordinating organization • a provincial advisory committee on university affairs should supervise the development of a long-range Master Plan for the development of higher education

Legend:

AUCC = Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada
CAUT = Canadian Association of University Teachers

COU = Council of Ontario Universities (formerly the Committee of Presidents of Provincially-assisted Universities of Ontario)
OCUA = Ontario Council on University Affairs

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1970	Commission on the Relations Between Universities and Governments (Hurtubise, Rowat Commission)	AUCC/ CAUT/ Canadian Union of Students/Union générale des étudiants du Québec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • government should clarify public goals for universities • voluntary university cooperation seldom effective without government sanctions • provinces should establish coordinating and planning commissions
1971-1983	Advisory Committee on Academic Planning (ACAP) Planning Assessments 1975-1976 Planning Appraisals 1976-1980	COU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACAP developed graduate program planning reports based on discipline reviews • later, ACAP conducted planning appraisals • later still, ACAP provided COU with advice on the need, uniqueness and student demand for new graduate programs seeking public funding - this information was passed on to OCUA
1972	The Commission to Study the Rationalisation of University Research: <i>Quest for the Optimum: Research Policy in the Universities of Canada</i> (Bonneau, Corry Commission)	AUCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • greater institutional, provincial and national coordination and planning of university research necessary • institutional differentiation in emphasis on research and access to research funding
1972	Commission on Postsecondary Education in Ontario: <i>The Learning Society</i> (Wright Commission)	Government of Ontario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create a "Council on University Affairs" with executive powers to undertake coordination and planning and "buffer" institutions from government
1974	<i>Planning for Planning</i> (Trotter Report)	AUCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more long-term planning required by institutions and government • processes of information sharing, joint development of objectives and goals more important than structures • institutional role differentiation required
1977	<i>The Northern Dilemma: Public Policy and Post-Secondary Education in Northern Ontario</i> (Cameron Report)	OCUA, Ontario Economic Council, Ontario Council of Regents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • merge some northern colleges and universities • create an "Ontario Council on Northern Postsecondary Education" with coordinating responsibilities for all of postsecondary education in the North
1978	<i>The Ontario University System: A Statement of Issues</i>	OCUA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need for rationalization and consolidation of programs through increased role differentiation
1979	<i>System on the Brink: A Financial Analysis of the Ontario University System 1979</i>	OCUA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need for system planning in view of "immense resource allocation problems"

Legend:

AUCC = Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada
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COMMISSIONS, REPORTS AND/OR INITIATIVES RELATED TO UNIVERSITY-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, COORDINATION AND PLANNING IN ONTARIO UNDERTAKEN SINCE 1945

Year	Commissions, Reports, and/or Initiatives	Agency or Government Sponsor	Central Observations or Recommendations with respect to Coordination and Planning
1980	<i>System Rationalization: A Responsibility and an Opportunity</i>	OCUA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need for system-wide consolidation and rationalization based on the existence of a university "system" and a particular "role" for each institution within that system
1980	<i>Challenge of Substance</i> Council of Ontario Universities' Committee on Long-Range Planning	COU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COU cannot effectively undertake inter-institutional planning and cooperation measures • all new undergraduate programs should be reported by COU to other institutions • COU should establish a committee to guide identification of undergraduate programming needs at the system-level
1980	<i>Numbers in the Clouds</i> Council of Ontario Universities' Committee on Long-Range Planning	COU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • newly developed undergraduate programs tend to duplicate existing programs • universities should exchange information regarding new undergraduate program developments • more long-range planning required but note COU was not prepared or equipped to do so
1981	<i>A Proposal for Structural Change in the University System of Northeastern Ontario</i> (Bourns Committee Report)	OCUA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establish a single multi-campus university for Northeastern Ontario better to achieve the government's accessibility and quality objectives for universities and better meet societal needs in the Northeast
1980-1982	Sectoral Planning	OCUA/COU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identification of institutional sectoral strength would create flexibility in the establishment of new academic programs in areas of program strength, but restrict program development in areas of limited academic involvement
1981	<i>Final Report of the Special Committee to Review Graduate Planning</i>	COU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COU should strengthen the graduate program quality appraisals process by introducing periodic appraisals • COU should appoint a Committee on Graduate Planning to assume a broad planning and monitoring role • COU is not constituted in such a way as to address the issue of the role definition of its members or planning criteria - OCUA should do this
1981	Committee on the Future Role of Universities in Ontario (Fisher Committee)	Government of Ontario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • universities should have responsibility for institutional planning within the framework of government objectives and pursue differing institutional roles based on their strengths • OCUA should have an academic advisory body
1983	<i>Report on Education in North-Eastern Ontario</i> (Parrott Committee)	Ministry of Colleges and Universities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • single multi-campus university for Northeastern Ontario with centralized academic and financial governance structures

Legend:

AUCC = Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada
CAUT = Canadian Association of University Teachers

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OCUA = Ontario Council on University Affairs

Table 2

COMMISSIONS, REPORTS AND/OR INITIATIVES RELATED TO UNIVERSITY-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, COORDINATION AND PLANNING IN ONTARIO UNDERTAKEN SINCE 1945

Year	Commissions, Reports, and/or Initiatives	Agency or Government Sponsor	Central Observations or Recommendations with respect to Coordination and Planning
1984	The Commission on the Future Development of the Universities of Ontario <i>Ontario Universities: Options and Futures</i> (Bovey Commission)	Government of Ontario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> proposed an "operational plan which...provides for more clearly defined, different and distinctive roles" for universities institutional differentiation should occur in a competitive context rather than by formal designation and central control OCUA should have specified regulatory powers enabling it to reconcile conflicting institutional aspirations establishment of a Northeastern Ontario University Committee and a Northwestern Ontario University Committee, subordinate to OCUA, to advise the Minister on issues related to coordination and planning in relation to regional needs in Northern Ontario
1986 to 1990	The Corridor Negotiations Related to the Implementation of a new University Funding System	OCUA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a funding mechanism implemented with a specific "planning" aspect related to system-level needs institutions negotiate activity levels with OCUA, with "planned" increases or decreases in enrolment resulting in stable funding levels
1988	<i>The Report of the External Advisor to the Minister of Colleges and Universities on the Future Role and Function of the Ontario Council on University Affairs and its Academic Advisory Committee</i> (Stubbs Report)	Ministry of Colleges and Universities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OCUA attempting to play an advisory and regulatory role within the corridor system of funding, but lacks the mandate and resources to execute such a role in a timely and effective manner OCUA should abandon some regulatory functions in order to take a more active role in system planning and coordination
1990	Premier's Council Report <i>People and Skills in the New Global Economy</i>	Ontario Premier's Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> educational opportunities in Ontario should be a continuum of opportunities for life-long learning community colleges and universities viewed in a "post-secondary system" context credit transfer arrangements should be established to provide continuity and advanced standing with respect to credit transfer from colleges to universities and from universities to colleges
1990	Vision 2000: Quality and Opportunity	Government of Ontario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> build better links among colleges and between colleges, schools and universities to facilitate movement of students and provide better access to advanced training create combined college-university degree programs
1991	Commission of Inquiry on Canadian University Education (Stuart Smith Commission)	AUCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> greater sharing of expertise among universities nationally universities should form national consortium to deliver distance education more efficiently and effectively establish a national council for credit transfer create combined college-university degree programs
1992	University Transition Assistance	OCUA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> targeted funding program in which priority was placed on funding projects which had a "system-wide" impact and projects involving both universities and colleges

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**COMMISSIONS, REPORTS AND/OR INITIATIVES RELATED TO UNIVERSITY-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, COORDINATION AND PLANNING IN ONTARIO
UNDERTAKEN SINCE 1945**

Year	Commissions, Reports, and/or Initiatives	Agency or Government Sponsor	Central Observations or Recommendations with respect to Coordination and Planning
1992	<i>Transfer of Undergraduate Course Credit Among Ontario Universities: Report and Recommendations</i> (Baker Report)	COU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consistent policies and procedures needed across the university sector with respect to transfer of credit among Ontario universities
1992	University Restructuring Steering Committee (URSC) <i>Open Letter to Members of the Ontario University Community and Other Interested Persons</i> , October 30, 1992	Ministry of Colleges and Universities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • purpose of URSC included making the university sector responsive to the continuous or lifelong educational needs of the economy • proposed research agenda included issues of diversity of institutional mission; enhancing post-secondary cooperation between colleges and universities and between them and the broader society; encouraging cooperative resource sharing among universities and between universities and the broader society
1993	Task Force on Advanced Training <i>No Dead Ends</i> (Pitman Task Force)	Government of Ontario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • colleges, universities and the employment sector must work in partnership to provide advanced training programs • eliminate barriers to "inter-sectoral" post-secondary credit transfer • create a mechanism to facilitate community college-university credit transfer in both directions
1993	<i>University Accountability: A Strengthened Framework</i> Report of the Task Force on University Accountability (Broadhurst Report)	Confederation of Ontario University Staff Associations Council of Chairmen of Ontario Universities Council of Ontario Universities Ministry of Colleges and Universities Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations Ontario Council on University Affairs Ontario Federation of Students Ontario Graduate Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recommended substantial strengthening of university accountability policies and practices by enhancing governing body supervision and creation of an independent, external monitoring agency that would be arms-length from both universities and government • "Accountability Review Committee" be established within the Ontario Council on University Affairs • each institution should have a mission statement and accompanying academic and financial plans • governing body should develop measures to assess performance which include performance indicators
1994	<i>The National Agenda</i> and subsequent initiatives	Council of Ministers of Education, Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remove barriers to post-secondary credit transfer (among universities for the first two years of university study, and subsequently among colleges, and between universities and colleges) • expand interprovincial collaboration among universities on curriculum, distance education

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**COMMISSIONS, REPORTS AND/OR INITIATIVES RELATED TO UNIVERSITY-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, COORDINATION AND PLANNING IN ONTARIO
UNDERTAKEN SINCE 1945**

Year	Commissions, Reports, and/or Initiatives	Agency or Government Sponsor	Central Observations or Recommendations with respect to Coordination and Planning
1995	<p><i>Sustaining Quality in Changing Times: Funding Ontario Universities, A Discussion Paper, August 1994</i></p> <p><i>Advisory Memorandum 95-III: Resource Allocation for Ontario Universities, 1995</i></p>	OCUA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Minister of Education and Training: requested that a revised funding policy be developed in the context of an integrated educational system permitting "easy movement" from one sector to another • indicated that the funding system must encourage sharing and cooperation among universities, colleges of applied arts and technology and others • indicated that the funding system should encourage cooperation and restructuring at the program level, differentiation and interdependence <p>Advice to the Minister recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discipline/sectoral "societal need" reviews for professional and quasi-professional programs; implementation of undergraduate academic quality reviews and provisions for transferability of credits; funding mechanism as key policy instrument • allocation of funds based on 2 formulae - teaching and scholarship activity levels ; and research activity levels • activity levels to be negotiated on five-year basis • formulae to be cost-based • envelope funding promote restructuring and accessibility • credit transferability for first 2 years become a condition for grant eligibility
1996	<p><i>Excellence Accessibility Responsibility: Report of the Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education (David Smith Commission)</i></p>	Government of Ontario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advocated deregulation of institutions coupled with accountability exercised through institutional governing bodies • asserted that the basic structure of the system is sound - no need to "impose a grand new design" • quality and institutional differentiation to be encouraged in "a less regulated environment" • government should encourage, rather than direct, the development of arrangements for credit transfer across the postsecondary sector • an advisory body should be established to provide oversight of institutional accountability processes and undertake and publish research and analysis of postsecondary education including colleges and universities

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programs aimed at institutional specialization to avoid the inefficient allocation of scarce resources. A wide variety of formal structures facilitating coordination were advocated. The recommended forms varied from state-wide unitary governing boards, independent planning/coordinating commissions with executive powers, and advisory agencies at arms-length from the government and the institutions, to voluntary coordinating and planning structures created by the university collectivity. In previous chapters, it was apparent that government and university advisors almost unanimously concluded that uncoordinated and unplanned development was not in the public interest, in that it engendered destructive competition for students and scarce resources and made sub-optimal use of public funds. At the same time, one finds a bewildering array of *ad hoc* initiatives and prescriptions emanating from the university collectivity and from government in an effort to facilitate system level coordination. Why didn't more systematic, formal coordination and planning occur in Ontario? There appear to be a number of contributing factors.

6.1.1 *The Ontario Council on University Affairs: Purposeful Inadequacy*

Under the general pressure of fiscal constraint in public finances and the particular weight of public recommendations and institutional demands for an impartial and apolitical locus for the resolution of conflicts among institutions, the government established in 1974, the Ontario Council on University Affairs (OCUA), an advisory, intermediary structure, to provide it with policy advice and to facilitate institutional coordination and planning. OCUA's ability to facilitate the development of public policy and enhance the coordination and planning of the university system quickly fell short of university and government expectations. Universities felt OCUA wasn't effective enough in conveying their financial needs to

government and that government wasn't prepared to listen to OCUA in this regard. In this assessment they were correct. Government viewed OCUA as increasingly unrealistic in its advocacy of additional funding for the sector. As a senior administrator in the Ministry explained:

By the 1980s, OCUA's annual funding advice was seen as a joke. Although we would always take what OCUA did as we trundled over to the Frost Building to talk with the Treasury guys...about what the allocation should be, it was always ...seen as ...tremendous wishful thinking...Everybody would roll their eyes and say well isn't that nice that the Council thinks that they should get a 12% increase, we're talking 6% here guys. ...It was becoming increasingly obvious that there was no respect within government for the methodology. When you think about it, it is amazing that OCUA survived as long as it did. ...the reason it survived was because politically it was...nice to be able to send messy issues that Ministers didn't want to deal with down the street for consideration and a nice long consultative process.⁷⁹⁸

In spite of numerous recommendations related to the necessity of strengthening OCUA in order to achieve government objectives related to the efficient and effective use of public resources, successive governments failed to act in this regard. There are a number of possible explanations for this. Skolnik and Jones suggest that the delegation of executive authority to a government agency contradicts the fundamental premises of ministerial responsibility in a parliamentary democracy.⁷⁹⁹ Former Ontario Minister of Colleges and Universities and Premier, William G. Davis would appear to agree:

There is no question, it [executive authority] would have made...the whole question of funding, the debates over formulas, who got capital...much easier for government, and it would have been easier for the Minister of the day or the Premier to say when the Chairman of the Board or the President of a university

798. Interview with a Senior Ministry Official, April 10, 1997. As J. Stefan Dupré noted: "The flip side is that it is nice for universities to send something down the street rather than to Ministers who might decide something!". Written comments provided to the author, June 1997.

799. Michael Skolnik and Glen Jones, "A Comparative Analysis of Arrangements for State Coordination of Higher Education in Canada and the United States", *Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 63, No. 2, March/April 1992, pp. 128-129.

came in “Look, go see the council, they’re the ones who decide,” and wash your hands of it, ...[but] I think that was really potentially an abdication of responsibility as well.⁸⁰⁰

Governments may, in fact, prefer a more market-oriented approach where incentives, disincentives and limitations of funding policies allow government greater flexibility in terms of priorities and objectives. Such an approach places more emphasis on careful institutional planning, especially where public support is constrained or declining. Perhaps, as Bonneau and Corry suggested, the impersonal and anonymous nature of market forces resulting from the preferences of a large number of individual decisions and based on a variety of unknown factors, are easier for universities to tolerate than direct intervention of identifiable bureaucrats or government agencies whose motivations can be scrutinized and decision-support data criticized.⁸⁰¹ It also does not politicize the issue of restricting institutional roles and missions. If universities are unable to realize all their academic aspirations within a competitive environment, they cannot lay blame for their circumstances at the doorstep of the Ontario Legislature.

Perhaps the government of Ontario’s original commitment to university autonomy as a fundamental aspect of its approach to university-government relations has been so enmeshed with its operating grants formula, which has been described as highly “non-directive and unobtrusive in university operations...”⁸⁰² that any shift away from this approach is strongly resisted by universities even when government has recognized that such an allocative mechanism does not necessarily ensure outcomes consistent with public policy objectives.

800. Interview with the William G. Davis, April 16, 1997.

801. Louis-Philippe Bonneau and J.A. Corry, *Quest for the Optimum: Research Policy in the Universities of Canada*, Ottawa: Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, 1972, pp. 64-65.

802. Stenton, *op cit.*, p. 404.

Certainly university Presidents believed that “it was in the universities’ interest that OCUA remain advisory”.⁸⁰³

Reinforcing the value placed by all parties on university autonomy over the years was a bias against centralization. As William G. Davis observed:

...there was always a feeling that we could solve the problems by centralizing ...more, and yet when the prospect of this started to emerge and [the universities] began to realize the impacts of it, I think there was a recognition that while the status quo was not perfection...it was somewhat better than the alternatives.⁸⁰⁴

The popularity of recent management trends emphasizing local management, decentralization and “privatization” of public services would suggest that the Ontario government’s actions simply reflect rational decision-making in recognition of the fact that it is more likely that decisions about the efficient and effective use of public resources can be better made locally by university administrators than centrally by Ministry bureaucrats.

Arguably, all of the above factors weighed against the establishment of an intermediary body with executive authority to varying degrees over the past quarter century. However, perhaps the most important obstacle to the establishment of a strengthened intermediary agency or one with executive authority was internal opposition to such a development within the Ministry itself. As a senior official of the Ministry recalled:

There was absolutely no interest in the Ministry of giving OCUA executive powers. There was a feeling that to the extent that any executive powers existed outside the institutions themselves, they should reside in the Ministry. It should be the Minister who would get to make those calls. We didn’t want to have a buffer or advisory body making those calls. Although that was certainly talked about, the British model, ...there was no political interest and within the bureaucracy too, the bureaucrats felt, whatever role we had in

803. Interview with Peter George, April 9, 1997.

804. Interview with the William G. Davis, April 16, 1997.

advising the Minister...would be diminished, so why set up something like that?⁸⁰⁵

By 1990, new needs for coordination among universities were identified, and in some policy areas such needs were superseded by the expectation of greater coordination and planned development across the entire post-secondary sector, encompassing both colleges and universities. At this juncture, not only was it clear that OCUA, as currently structured, was inadequate to meet the needs for coordinated and planned development of universities, it was not at all positioned to address emerging new societal needs spanning the whole of postsecondary education. Neither was its college counterpart, the Council of Regents equipped to assume a postsecondary policy perspective. In spite of a perception by the Ministry and external advisors who had been given a postsecondary reporting mandate of a need for greater postsecondary coordination, recommendations for addressing the situation focused on new processes, policies and the creation of additional new “intermediary” structures which were distinct from, but often overlapped the responsibilities of the existing councils. While the existing structures could have been eliminated and a single postsecondary agency with authority for coordination, planning and policy encompassing both universities and colleges might have been established, no such recommendation was made by external advisors.⁸⁰⁶

In 1993, when OCUA was asked to undertake a review of the funding allocation system it was in effect being asked to transform the allocative mechanism into a more effective instrument of system coordination and planning. The difficulty of using an instrument intended to allocate available public funds in an equitable fashion among autonomous institutions to

805. Interview with Senior Ministry Official, April 10, 1997.

806. Although in 1996, a postsecondary body was recommended by the Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education, it was not intended to have authority for system-wide coordination and planning.

achieve policy objectives related to system coordination and planning, without an appropriately empowered structure for coordination and planning on an ongoing basis, were obvious to many from the outset of the resource allocation review. This point had certainly been made in a variety of reports undertaken since the establishment of OCUA. The Resource Allocation advice reflected this need for a coordinating and planning structure, even in the context of a more directive funding instrument. Shrouded in the pretense of a new funding mechanism, the RAR advice implied a much more powerful role for OCUA in making coordination and planning decisions in the future.

That OCUA in its advisory form would have been incapable of implementing the Resource Allocation advice was recognized by the Council. As the then Chair, Joy Cohnstaedt, recalls, while the disestablishment of OCUA was discussed by the Council, it was never recommended:

There was one possible recommendation discussed by members of the Council who were closely associated with RAR and that was to recommend that OCUA be disestablished. The reason for recommending that OCUA be disestablished was the sense that in its current form, it could not enable the changes that RAR would require to be undertaken if it continued in its present form. ...OCUA certainly wasn't the body that would be required to undertake the level of sophisticated work that RAR, if implemented, would demand.⁸⁰⁷

The RAR advice contained proposals tying the funding allocation mechanism more closely to public policy objectives through new "terms and conditions" attached to the receipt of government grants, which would have transformed OCUA's influence over university behaviour into authority. Albeit without formal changes to OCUA's mandate, this authority would still be subject to Ministerial approval. OCUA would have conducted system-level

807. Interview with Joy Cohnstaedt, former Chair, Ontario Council on University Affairs, April 17, 1997.

discipline or sectoral reviews of the societal need for existing programs and required undergraduate program quality reviews for existing programs which would eventually be linked to activity targets set by the government for teaching/scholarship and research functions. It would have specified “floor” provisions for credit transfer policy among universities and made compliance a condition of the receipt of operating grants. It also would have required data gathering to enhance its decision support information databases and facilitate the movement to a cost-based evaluation of the financial needs of Ontario universities relative to public policy objectives. Taken as a whole, the resource allocation advice, if accepted, would have transformed OCUA into a *de facto* statewide coordinating agency along the lines of what Aims McGuinness has described as a “strong coordinating board.”

In retrospect, while OCUA provided a system-level historical memory and often integrated threads of former commission’s recommendations on matters such as role differentiation, funding instruments and system coordination into their public hearings and their advice to governments, it generally accepted its tenuous, sometimes influential, but largely powerless perch between the government and the universities. While successfully playing a coordinating role in some instances such as the corridor negotiations process in the late 1980s, OCUA relied heavily on influence, moral suasion, financial incentives and disincentives and especially the availability of additional funds to “grease the wheels” of system coordination and planning. In recent years, OCUA adopted a largely regulatory mode, approving academic programs for funding eligibility, adjudicating competitively allocated funding envelopes, and allocating “targeted” operating grant funds.

Further, universities were less supportive of OCUA once it abandoned efforts to

advocate on their behalf for additional university funding. When OCUA accepted the government's decision that stable or declining funding for universities would constitute the future funding reality for the sector, and then undertook to reconsider ways in which available funds could be best allocated, or reallocated in the public interest, it was no longer considered to be sufficiently "independent" of government and the university collectivity largely turned against it, generally discrediting it in the process. OCUA was no longer effectively balancing vested interests with the public interest. In political terms, the voice of the vested interests carried more weight than that of the public interest.

Although government-university relations no longer occur in an environment where there is an intermediary buffer, those who forget the past are at risk of repeating it. As in the early days of university expansion in the 1950s and 1960s, there are bound to be institutional "winners" under the piecemeal, politicized coordination that is occurring in the current environment. The "losers" will initially lobby quietly for some sort of neutral centralized forum in which to air their grievances, and perhaps once their cries reach an unbearable pitch, reconsideration of an intermediary structure will begin again.

6.1.2 *The Political Constraints on System Coordination and Planning in Ontario*

While the province's advisors identified a variety of means by which the university-government relationship could be enhanced through a greater degree of system coordination and planning, there has been little actual change in the nature of the relationship over time. The series of unheeded calls for more effective structures for system-wide coordination and planning suggests that there was general satisfaction with the *status quo*.

While this appears to be the view of the university collectivity in recent years, there

were many instances where the evidence suggests that the Ministers responsible for universities believed otherwise. In the early 1960s, John Robarts, and later William G. Davis intervened in the university sector to a significant degree to facilitate the rapid expansion of publicly funded universities across the province and threatened intervention in university management decisions, should academic expansion not proceed in a planned and coordinated fashion. Throughout the 1960s and early 1970s, the universities recognized the legitimacy of the government's concerns regarding rational system-level development and initially undertook to address these concerns as a collectivity to stave-off government intervention. During the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Minister of Colleges and Universities, Bette Stephenson, made a concerted effort to devise a new policy framework based on a "detailed operational plan" that would increase role differentiation and specialization among institutions and provide OCUA with a greater role in ensuring coordinated and planned system-level development. Again in the early 1990s, Minister of Education and Training, Dave Cooke, was on the brink of placing university-government relations on a new footing where government would have had much greater control over system development and influence over institutional decision-making through changes to the funding mechanism and to OCUA's role.⁸⁰⁸ In spite of reoccurring bouts of flirtation with change at various points in time, the historical record reflects relative stability.

It is interesting to note that almost every time there has been significant emphasis on university system-level coordination and planning, and associated government intervention in the

808. In a brief interview with former Minister of Education and Training, Dave Cooke, on April 28, 1997, Mr. Cooke indicated that had the 1995 provincial election not been called, he would have used OCUA's advice as an opportunity to intervene more directly in the university sector. He noted that while "I wouldn't have acted on it [OCUA's advice] in exactly the way it was presented - there would have had to be some compromises - I would have used the funding mechanism to rationalize the universities and force them to change."

university sector either occurred or was about to occur, the responsible Minister and Deputy Minister had both elementary-secondary education and postsecondary education in their portfolio. At such times, the responsible Ministers tended to be more senior and influential relative to their Cabinet colleagues. The evidence also suggests that the bureaucratic culture within the division of the Ministry responsible for universities favoured university autonomy over government intervention. It appears, however, that when the Ministries for primary-secondary education and postsecondary education are merged or Ministerial responsibility is spread over the two ministries, the responsible Minister's views on the university sector may be influenced by the much larger and dominant Ministry of Education which places much greater emphasis on centralized control. In addition, by having multiple advisors, the Minister's thinking is broadened by the competing bureaucratic perspectives. This also suggests that bureaucrats dedicated solely to university policy issues tend to favour the dominant values and priorities of the universities, such as institutional autonomy and decentralized management structures in the advice they provide to the Minister.

Table 3 identifies the provincial Ministers responsible for universities in Ontario from 1945 to 1997 and when compared to the initiatives of the Ontario government in Table 2, illustrates how the periods of time when Ministers were prepared to be, or were, more interventionist, tend to coincide with periods when they had simultaneous responsibilities for elementary-secondary and postsecondary education.⁸⁰⁹

Politics has clearly protected the universities from direct government intervention. On numerous occasions "macro"-politics, especially the timing of elections, changes in government

809. When making this comparison, one must remember that a number of reports were made public or initiatives such as the introduction of a corridor funding system occurred after the initiating Minister had moved to another portfolio or the government had changed. It appears that perhaps only Richard Allen's term as Minister would suggest a comparable emphasis on government intervention when the Ministries were not merged.

Table 3

Provincial Ministers Responsible for Ontario Universities 1945-1997		
Premier	Minister	Ministry
<i>Progressive Conservative:</i> George Drew 1943-1948	George A. Drew 1943-1948	Department of Education
Thomas Kennedy 1948-1949	Dana Porter 1948-1951	
Leslie Frost 1949-1961	W.J. Dunlop 1951-1959	
John Robarts 1961-1971	John P. Robarts 1959-1962	Department of Education and Department of University Affairs (created in 1964)
	William G. Davis 1962-1971	
William G. Davis 1971-1985	John White 1971 (March - October) (From October 1971-1972)	Department of University Affairs
	George Kerr 1972 (February - September)	Ministry of Colleges and Universities
	Jack McNie 1972 - 1974	
	James Auld 1974 - 1975	
	Harry Parrott 1975-1978	
	Bette Stephenson 1978-1985	Ministry of Education and Ministry of Colleges and Universities
Frank Miller 1985 (to June 18)		
	Keith Norton 1985 (February - May)	
	Larry Grossman 1985 (May - June)	

Table 3 (continued)

Provincial Ministers Responsible for Ontario Universities 1945-1997		
Premier	Minister	Ministry
<i>Liberal:</i> David Peterson 1985-1990	Gregory Sorbara 1985-1987	Ministry of Colleges and Universities
	Lyn McLeod 1987-1989	
	Sean Conway 1989-1990	
<i>New Democrat:</i> Bob Rae 1990-1995	Richard Allen 1990-1993	Ministry of Colleges and Universities and Ministry of Skills Development
	Dave Cooke 1993-1995	Ministry of Education and Training
<i>Progressive Conservative:</i> Michael Harris 1995- present	John Snobelen 1995- October 1997	



Shaded areas represented periods of time where there was a single Minister responsible for both elementary-secondary education and postsecondary education.

and the shifting of Ministerial portfolios scuttled the prospect of substantive changes that appeared to be on the brink of implementation. “Micro” politics has also played a role in preserving the *status quo* in university-government relations and protecting universities from government intervention. While recognizing the need for greater system coordination and institutional differentiation, governments have been politically boxed-in by their educational values which have emphasized geographic equality of access and provincially-standardized quality. These have long been core values also underlying the development of public education at the elementary and secondary levels in the Province. At the time universities were expanded, the Premier, John Robarts was a former Minister of Education and William G. Davis was both Minister responsible for universities and for elementary and secondary education. It is not surprising, therefore, that the values that dominated elementary-secondary education would influence the values underlying the province’s support of publicly funded universities. The values of standardized access led the government to create independent universities rather than liberal arts colleges in the 1960s to meet the need for university expansion. This decision implied that the new institutions were intended to be of equal status and that they should aspire to a level of quality and a role comparable to that of the existing universities. The institutions were situated in all regions of the province in order to provide a substantial number of undergraduate places away from the major metropolitan centres and ensure regional accessibility to a comprehensive array of academic programs. That they were public institutions, and not denominational, was considered essential to the standardization of academic quality. As former Minister of Colleges and Universities, William G. Davis recalls:

...it was important that the students at those institutions [that were formerly denominational] not be in any way prejudiced because of lack of funding. I think with Laurentian, it was something beyond that. I think it was a priority to establish and support in an equitable fashion, the funding for a university in the

Northeastern part of the province. ...Laurentian did not have the same broad spectrum of course offerings so it required some additional encouragement because we were very anxious to have that university available to the students from the Northeast.⁸¹⁰

That all universities should be created equal was a deliberately generous decision and one to which the universities, the communities in which they exist and the students would hold the government hostage to ever after.⁸¹¹

The political dynamics inherent in an area-based legislature have worked against formal institutional role differentiation and institutional rationalization. University lobbying has only served to buttress the powerful regional politics protecting the universities from greater differentiation or closure. Cabinet's reaction to the proposal of the Committee on the Future Role of Universities in Ontario (Fisher Committee) to close some universities and restructure others or increase funding, reinforced the degree to which regional politics were a potent agent of the university sector *status quo*. When asked which was the worse of the two recommendations made by the Fisher Committee (ie. close universities or give them more money), then Minister of Education and Colleges and Universities, Bette Stephenson, recalls emphatically that it was:

Closing universities. More money wasn't in the cards either...[but]...nobody [in Cabinet] from Peterborough or Thunder Bay or Windsor or Sudbury, wanted to hear anything of that sort at all and certainly nobody from Waterloo wanted to hear it either. ...no way was this ever going to pass. Politically it was dead in the water.⁸¹²

Not until 1996 and the establishment of the Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education, did external advisors appear to acknowledge the political reality in Ontario around issues of university development. The Panel recommended a more deregulated

810. Interview with William G. Davis, April 16, 1997.

811. However, this did not imply that the government expected all universities to be the same.

812. Interview with Bette Stephenson, April 11, 1997.

policy framework for universities, and one that did not envision formal structures for coordination and planning among universities or between colleges and universities. The Panel's advice dispelled any pretences that may have existed about the degree of emphasis Ontario should place on formal coordination and planning at the system level. It also served to underscore the primacy of financial incentives in defining university-government relations and shaping the development of the system through what one would consider unconscious, uncoordinated or evolutionary planning as achieved through interinstitutional competition.

6.1.3 *Reaffirmation of the Informal Approach to System Coordination and Planning in Ontario*

From the mid 1980s, OCUA sought to achieve the government's objectives related to coordination and planning within the corridor funding mechanism. However, there are clearly limitations on what a funding formula can be expected to do. It can serve to create incentives and disincentives for institutions to do things that are otherwise protected from government intervention by virtue of university autonomy and particularly academic freedom. At the same time, funding formulas do not serve as effective instruments through which to address the changing policy priorities of governments. The Ontario university sector, since 1967 has been highly oriented toward formula funding and as demographics and the fiscal circumstances of the province changed, OCUA was regularly preoccupied with the time-consuming process of formula revision. Perhaps the lack of support OCUA exhibited toward the Academic Advisory Committee's efforts to issue planning related discussion papers in the early 1990s was a reflection of the limited relation that AAC's conclusions would have had to the regulatory instruments OCUA had at its disposal. As Darling *et al.* noted:

The basic concept of program review, whether to determine quality or minimum standards as in accreditation, is not suited well to formula funding and vice versa. Program review, when it can be made to work on a system-wide basis, leads to greater differentiation between institutions and programs than is within the scope of most funding formulas. Perhaps the most difficult choice facing planners in higher education is that between a system oriented to program and institutional quality and a system funded by a formula. The two are not highly compatible.⁸¹³

With OCUA abolished, and government's role in the program funding approval process substantially pared down, system coordination and planning in Ontario will remain informal. Government relations with the publicly-funded universities remains primarily a technical one, defined by institutionally focused financial incentives and disincentives that have evolved over time, usually through consultation between government and the universities, and modified in an *ad hoc* fashion in response to changing policy objectives and fiscal circumstances.

6.1.4 University-Government Relations in Ontario: A Relationship Among Bit Players

It is important to note that the fiscal circumstances of the universities are largely determined by the total amount of public support provided by government and that the global amount available in any given year is a function of decisions made at the highest levels of government, sometimes well beyond the control of the Ministry directly responsible for universities and largely disconnected from any objectives or priorities the Ministry may have for the development of the university system. A university system shaped by financial incentives and disincentives constitutes an alternative, more flexible approach to system development in that the outcomes may not be known in advance and the range of impacts on

813. A.L. Darling *et al.*, "Autonomy and Control: A University Funding Formula as an Instrument of Public Policy". mimeograph of a revised version of a paper that appeared in *Higher Education*, Vol.18, No. 5. p. 7.

institutional development may not have been clearly nor publicly debated from a planning perspective related to who does what and how much of it. Within this approach to system development, Ministry policy with respect to universities is highly vulnerable to changes in the financial decisions made at the highest levels of government, and in isolation from the Ministry's goals and objectives for the sector. Examples of this include the decision in the 1960s to expand the university sector, the introduction of the *Social Contract* legislation in 1993 and the manner in which government set out to close advisory bodies. In addition, Cabinet directives based on a significant degree of public debate such as those pertaining to tuition fee determination and the determination of the formula fee, tuition charges above which resulted in deductions from an institution's formula grant, also illustrate the importance of decisions taken by the Premier, Cabinet or the Treasurer.

University presidents, acting individually or collectively through COU, have a leadership role within their institutions that would exceed that of a Minister of the Crown *vis-à-vis* Cabinet. Yet they are accountable to both their university governing bodies, which are bound to govern in the best interests of their institution, and to university faculty. At the end of the day, university presidents lack the authority to make unilateral decisions that are binding on their institution's faculty, and governing body to whom they are directly accountable, without explicit consent. Herein lies the inherent inappropriateness of COU - an association of vested interests - as a source of advice on system-level policy decisions. As a result, when the period of institutional expansion and government largess ended and decisions were required related to retrenchment, institutional and program closures, and limitations on institutional roles and missions, the Council of Ontario Universities could not assume responsibility for system-level considerations involving trade-offs between institutional

interests and the broader public interest. It would place university presidents in a conflict of interest *vis-à-vis* their faculty, Senates and governing boards, which are properly responsible for such decisions.

While some of the most fundamental decisions affecting university-government relations are made at the highest levels of government and by governing bodies of universities, the day to day decisions about the development of the university system are made by university faculty, administrators and presidents, and senior Ministry officials. In an environment where decisions affecting system-level development devolve to individual institutions acting in their respective best interests, and within the Ministry, to individual units handling discrete policy and program initiatives, diffused, decentralized and informal designation of responsibility for such decisions is inevitable. This situation often makes it difficult for universities to understand and operationalize government's objectives and priorities. Where government objectives and anticipated outcomes are unclear, accountability "for what?" remains vague. The university-government relationship is plagued by multiple sources of authority and conflicting visions about the way the system should be developing.

Such circumstances increasingly politicize the competition among universities, which in turn exacerbates tensions with respect to institutional status, and access to public funds. For COU, being seen to act in the interests of all its members has become more difficult since the abolition of OCUA. COU is currently being drawn into the policy process, as a surrogate advisory body to the Ministry, engaging in what is being referred to as "shuttle diplomacy" with senior government officials. As one observer noted, this is an extremely risky undertaking for COU politically:

In many ways, COU has become a kind of substitute for OCUA in terms of providing advice to the government. There are two difficulties, one is government could become quite capricious about saying we want advice on issue x but not on issue y. It does in a sense suborn COU...I think the government has cleverly got COU to be recommending policy initiatives [with respect to tuition increases, for example] for which the government then passes responsibility back to the universities and deflects the anger from the government to the universities. I think that's the risk for COU - that it gets caught up in ... being an instrument of government policy. The other thing is that a lot of that depends on COU's being able to maintain a consensus around these kinds of positions. That puts tremendous pressure on COU and on the members of COU to reach consensus and on some...issues the institutional interest can be widely variant. Trying to force a compromise around some of these issues is very tough.⁸¹⁴

One cannot help but recall W.M. Sibley's warning in relation to the issue of whether and how far universities can and should engage in lobbying or other political activities: "There is perhaps some danger that those who seek to live by political action may also die by it."⁸¹⁵

Scholarly analysis of voluntary organizations and democratic political processes suggests that despite democratic structure, conditions of oligarchy are almost universal in the internal operation of voluntary associations.⁸¹⁶ Glenny found this to be equally true of voluntary agencies for coordinating higher education, noting:

An institution is a leader or follower, depending upon size, prestige, age, the number and social status of alumni, the political support it can command, and the personalities who represent it.⁸¹⁷

Managing the hierarchy, or what has been termed the "sociological order of prestige," among institutions is one of the primary underlying functions of American state-wide coordinating systems. In Ontario, in the absence of a buffer, managing the hierarchy is an extremely

814. Interview with Peter George, April 9, 1997.

815. W.M. Sibley, "The Role of Intermediary Bodies in Postsecondary Education," *Postsecondary Education Issues in the 1980's: Proceedings of the CMEC Conference on Postsecondary Education, Toronto, October 19-22, 1982*, Toronto: Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, 1983, p. 151.

816. Glenny, 1959, *op. cit.*, p. 251.

817. *Ibid.*

challenging role which has befallen COU.⁸¹⁸ Within a voluntary body jealousies and distrust simmer just below the surface, particularly where it is recognized that powerful institutions have more influence and can get a better deal with government acting unilaterally rather than cooperatively. As a former President of COU indicated:

It's hard not to pay more attention to [the President of the University of Toronto] than to a President of a really small university because on the one hand it's essential to try to give everybody an equal opportunity within the COU structure. Toronto pays 20% of the bills. It really is a difficult stretch. If...U of T wants something, it can wave its 20% part of the budget and say we deserve more attention than Nipissing or Trent does. That's the practical politics.⁸¹⁹

While advocating a highly deregulated environment for universities in relation to government, the Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education in Ontario did acknowledge that there were some functions, related in particular to accountability and policy development, that funding instruments cannot address and that should be provided for by way of a disinterested advisory agency, with a postsecondary mandate including both colleges and universities, residing at arm's length from government and the institutions. However, in the current environment where "less government" is a political priority and public resources are severely constrained for the foreseeable future, this author believes it to be more likely that additional government agencies will close before new ones are established.

6.1.5 A Potential Role for the Ministry in System Development

Throughout the 1990s, the Ministry responsible for university affairs in Ontario, the Ministry of Colleges and Universities and later the Ministry of Education and Training,

818. If COU fails in this role, then the Minister will be faced with managing the institutional hierarchy.

819. Interview with Peter George, April 9, 1997.

spawned a multiplicity of small, interest group-related agencies to facilitate each stakeholder group's dialogue with government. In addition to OCUA, a postsecondary level Advisory Committee on Francophone Affairs, an Aboriginal advisory council, and an office for academic quality and accountability were established to advise the Minister on various aspects of policy related to universities.⁸²⁰ Additional agencies had also been recommended to monitor accountability and undergraduate program quality. Far from enhancing system coordination and planning, there was the potential for significant discordance between these various interests. Further to the case for a single locus of responsibility for state-level coordination, Berdahl argues:

Rather than have coordination undertaken piecemeal by a variety of state offices, it is preferable from the standpoint both of autonomy and of the public interest that it be carried out by an agency specializing in higher education and planning on a comprehensive and long-range basis.⁸²¹

Perhaps the elimination of a number of advisory agencies will provide the Ministry with an opportunity to rethink the way in which the coordination and planned development of postsecondary education in Ontario can be best structured to satisfy society's and institutional needs. As Harold Enarson observed:

The growth of ...cooperation [between higher education and government] will be dependent on two things: first, the "climate of opinion" ...; second, the availability of practical machinery to encourage cooperation. [It] rarely "just happens."⁸²²

Perhaps the as yet undefined role of the Sector Policy Unit within the Ministry of

820. A postsecondary role for the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) was originally anticipated but has not yet materialized.

821. Berdahl, 1971, *op. cit.* pp. 41.

822. Harold Enarson, "Cooperative Planning to Meet the Needs of Increased Enrollments," *Current Issues in Higher Education*, ed. G. Kerry Smith, Washington: Association for Higher Education, National Education Association, 1956, p. 321, quoted in Robert O. Berdahl, 1971, *op. cit.* pp. 15-16.

Education and Training could provide a locus for the enunciation of formal Ministry objectives with respect to universities and facilitate the coordination of Ministry policy, and institutional accountability requirements around the achievement of these objectives. In view of the shortage of staff and the press of program delivery and responsiveness to changing political priorities, this appears highly unlikely. In addition, the perceived leadership status of the people who are at the locus is very important to university responsiveness and civil servants typically lack such status within the university community.

Without a locus for leadership in the development of broad objectives and specific goals for the university system based on a prioritization of competing political values, the universities will be forced to impute government priorities from policy choices and programs. “Accountability for what” will remain vague. Without a formal locus in which conflicting university-government objectives and priorities can be aired and discussed, universities are at risk of being besieged by *ad hoc* government policies and processes that may in fact conflict one with the other and with institutional perceptions of responsiveness.

6.1.6 *Conclusions Regarding Structures for System Coordination and Planning in Ontario*

One must conclude that the structures on which the government relied to provide leadership in system coordination and planning over the years were ill-equipped for the task. While this was recognized by all parties and a variety of means to address the issues were publicly debated, very little was actually done to restructure institutional or government agencies’ powers and responsibilities or to change the foundation of the university-government relationship, in part because there was no political will to do so, and in part because the

government was highly constrained by the political implications of the value it had placed on institutional autonomy, decentralized control of universities, and ensuring equity of access, quality and opportunity when the expansion of the university system occurred in the 1960s. This study suggests that university-government relations in Ontario are premised on the following, sometimes tacit, understandings: universities are non-denominational publicly funded institutions; they are autonomous rather than instruments of public policy; they are not micro-managed or centrally controlled; a plurality of institutions is desired rather than a single “Provincial” university; no universities will be closed; universities receive relatively equal treatment with respect to access to public support in order that programs available anywhere in the Province meet or exceed a peer-defined standard of good quality; in return for public funding, universities will provide access to all who have the desire to attend and the capability to benefit notwithstanding financial means; and universities will perform in a way that demonstrates responsiveness to societal needs and responsible stewardship of public resources.

In the next section, a detailed analysis of the nature of the coordination and planning efforts that were made by the Council of Ontario Universities and the Ontario Council on University Affairs will be undertaken.

6.2 An Analysis of Coordination and Planning Efforts in Ontario, 1945 to 1996

The recognition of legally autonomous secular universities as unique institutions that play an important role in the social, economic and cultural development of the province and the nation has long justified their receipt of public funds. In return for significant degrees of autonomy with respect to the use of public funds, universities have acknowledged the legitimacy of government’s responsibility to pursue the public interest with respect to the use

of such funds which totalled \$1.5 billion in 1996-97, and which constitute the primary source of university revenue. The specific objects of government intervention have varied over the period under study. During the 1950s and early 1960s, government sought to encourage university expansion by creating additional institutions and expanding academic program offerings, especially in the realm of graduate studies and research. Universities themselves were largely responsible for advising government on the nature and extent of institutional expansion needed and this advice was gratefully received and quickly implemented with public financing and limited provisions for accountability. As former Executive Director of the Council of Ontario Universities, Ed Monahan, observed:

In the heyday in the sixties, from the beginning of the Committee of Presidents, CUA [Committee on University Affairs] and the Committee...worked very closely. The Presidents had the ideas and they pushed them up to CUA and most of them were sensible and they got accepted. So, it was a grand cooperative exercise which, by and large, worked marvellously well. ...[T]imes were good and the pressures of divisiveness were much reduced. It was an ideal climate.⁸²³

During this early period in the growth and development of Ontario universities, there appears to have been a communion between government and the institutions with respect to the nature of the government-university relationship which emphasized the importance of universities, university autonomy, accessibility, and the avoidance of direct government intervention in university management or academic affairs. The issue of creating new universities would not arise again until the 1990s. At that time, despite advice developed by OCUA in consultation with the universities, which specified a process involving criteria and quality standards to be met before eligibility for university status could be achieved, the government of the day supported the immediate establishment of two new universities

823. Interview with Ed Monahan, April 10, 1997.

(Nipissing and Ryerson) from existing university-level institutions.

By the latter half of the 1960s, concerns expressed by government and the public that universities were developing in an uncoordinated and potentially expensive fashion resulted in a series of external advisors being invited to provide the government with advice on the ways and means to ensure orderly academic development and accountability. Government largely rejected such advice. Universities convinced government that they could undertake the desired coordination and planning collectively without government involvement. However, the results of their efforts were not fully satisfactory to government as fiscal constraint increased.

From 1974, the Ontario Council on University Affairs attempted to introduce financial incentives, policies and processes that would encourage role differentiation, program planning, rationalization and consolidation within a “system” context. To the early 1980s, these efforts were made within the context of a government that insisted the Ontario universities be collectively self-regulating. Government took the view that the universities should ultimately determine amongst themselves distinct roles and associated academic and research mandates, and undertake measures to ensure inter-institutional planning and coordination on their own.

This position was maintained by government in spite of the conclusions of the Commission on the Relations between Universities and Governments in 1970 that voluntary university cooperation was seldom effective and especially prone to failure without explicit government sanctions. While in practice, OCUA was intervening to an ever greater degree to ensure program planning and coordination at the graduate and undergraduate professional program levels, government and OCUA continued to advocate institutional self-regulation. Finally, in 1980, the universities emerged waving a large white flag, in the form of the report of the Council of Ontario Universities’ Committee on Long-Range Planning, which concluded

that as a voluntary organization committed to promoting the interests of all its institutional members, COU would not and could not effectively undertake decisions related to inter-institutional coordination and planning, especially where role differentiation was contemplated. In 1981, another COU report, this one from the Special Committee to Review Graduate Planning, underlined COU's inability to deal with issues of role definition or graduate program planning, although it reaffirmed the universities' commitment to appraise academic quality and to extend the quality appraisal process for new graduate programs to existing graduate programs as well. The discipline planning reviews undertaken by COU's Advisory Committee on Academic Planning (ACAP) had become mired in technical detail and inter-institutional politics. ACAP was abolished. In order to satisfy government that there would be something to fill the planning void, OCGS recommended that OCUA create for itself an academic advisory committee to assist it with academic planning decisions. Although some of ACAP's functions were picked up (albeit in a much more superficial fashion) by the Academic Advisory Committee established as an advisory body to OCUA in 1982, there was no serious attempt made, by either the universities or government, to undertake systematic, normative goal-oriented planning of the Ontario universities' future development.

Table 4 illustrates the evolution and demise of structures within the Ontario university sector with responsibility for system coordination and planning. It is important to note, however, that what is not evident is the degree to which these structures were able and willing to undertake such responsibilities.

Table 4
Primary Locus of Responsibility for System Coordination and Planning in Ontario 1945-1997

TABLE 4			Programs: Graduate			Programs: Undergraduate		
Years	System Planning	System Budgeting/ Funding	System Planning	System Quality	Funding Eligibility (New and existing programs)	System Planning	System Quality	Funding Eligibility (New Programs only)
1997	Ministry (diffused)	Ministry (Universities Branch)	Ministry (Universities Branch)	OCGS (new and existing programs)	Ministry (Universities Branch)	Ministry (Universities Branch)	COU/OCAV* (new and existing programs)	Ministry (Universities Branch)
1996 to 1989	OCUA	OCUA	OCUA/AAC	OCGS (new and existing-periodic appraisals introduced in 1982) and AAC (monitoring of OCGS)	OCUA on advice of AAC	OCUA/AAC	not done	OCUA/AAC (all undergraduate programs)
1989 to 1982						OCUA		OCUA (quasi-professional, special and Ryerson programs) AAC (undergraduate professional programs)
1982 to 1980						OCUA COU ACAP (winding down)		OCGS (new programs) OCUA

Table 4 (continued)

TABLE 4		Programs: Graduate			Programs: Undergraduate			
Years	System Planning	System Budgeting/ Funding	System Planning	System Quality	Funding Eligibility (New and existing programs)	System Planning	System Quality	Funding Eligibility (New Programs only)
1979	OCUA	OCUA	OCUA (quinquennial planning begins) COU (to advise OCUA on aims, objectives, strengths) ACAP	OCGS (new programs, and existing programs only where referred by ACAP or requested by institution)	OCUA	OCUA - only with respect to professional, health science, and Ryerson programs	not done	OCUA (professional and Ryerson programs)
1979 to 1976			ACAP Planning Appraisals					
1975 to 1974	OCUA and COU (3 and 5 year plans)		ACAP (Planning Assessments from 1971 - 1976)					OCUA (professional only)
1974 to 1968	Committee on University Affairs (CUA) (advisory to Minister of University Affairs)	Committee on University Affairs (CUA) (advisory to Minister of University Affairs/ after 1972 Ministry of Colleges and Universities			funding linked to OCGS quality appraisal and ACAP plan			
1967			OCGS		automatic within formula	not done		automatic within formula
1966 to 1964			COU Advisory Committee on Graduate Studies	not done	not done			not done
1964 to 1961	Advisory Committee on University Affairs (ACUA) and University Presidents (from 1962)	ACUA (advisory to Dept of Education/ Government)						

Table 4 (continued)

TABLE 4			Programs: Graduate				Programs: Undergraduate		
Years	System Planning	System Budgeting/ Funding	System Planning	System Quality	Funding Eligibility (New and existing programs)	System Planning	System Quality	Funding Eligibility (New Programs only)	
1961 to 1958	"University Committee" and technical experts advisory to Dept of Education/ Government of Department of Economics	University Committee and technical experts advisory to Dept of Education/ Government and Department of Economics	not done	not done	not done	not done	not done	not done	
1958- 1951	Department of Education aided by part-time "government advisors" and the Office of the Provincial Economist	Department of Education aided by part-time "government advisors" and the Office of the Provincial Economist							
1951- 1945	Department of Education, Treasurer	Department of Education, Treasurer							

6.2.1 *Why Did Graduate Program Planning Fail?*

Planning efforts were thwarted by structural, political and technical factors. Given that Ontario universities are statutorily independent corporations with individual governing boards, COU, the universities' collectivity, could never be delegated authority over its member institutions. COU was never intended to enforce binding decisions that would constrain its member institution's ambitions in order to realize the broader interests of province-wide academic development. COU was simply not prepared to make decisions about "who does what and how much of it".

The sheer technical complexity of collecting the data necessary to undertake province-wide discipline assessments or sectoral planning, further discouraged planning efforts. The related costs, time-commitments, and the divisiveness among institutions aroused by discussions of what data should be collected and the way in which program strength would be measured, far outweighed the perceived benefits of collective control over the process. By the 1980s, this view appeared to be shared equally by the universities and government.

6.2.2 *Why Were Universities Able to Accept the Quality Appraisals Process for Graduate Programs and Yet Reject Planning?*

The appraisals process is based on an objective standard of quality as defined through a process of peer review. Peer review is a process about which there is a high degree of consensus in the academic community. Planning, on the other hand, involves comparisons of programs and standards between institutions with potentially negative financial consequences and ultimately serves to limit the aspirations of some institutions. The politics surrounding

institutional self-denial, the public nature of the comparisons among institutional competitors who are divided into “winners” and “losers”, and formal limitations and constraints on institutional development based on externally-determined roles or missions, are all strategically avoided in the quality appraisals process. The appraisals process largely avoids the questions of “who does what and how much of it.” Program comparisons are not made horizontally between institutions but involve vertical comparisons of the same program over a period of time. The appraisals process strategically rejects public comparison of appraisal results (they are not publicly available from OCGS - OCGS directs all inquiries back to individual institutions). The appraisals process puts all programs that meet the minimum standard of “good quality” (and virtually all programs that are put forward do eventually meet the standard)⁸²⁴ on an equal footing relative to eligibility for government funding. Every program approved by OCGS is eligible to apply for government funding. It is, therefore, the government’s responsibility to make the “political” decisions about what institutions should be offering in response to societal needs and efficiency concerns.

Since the underlying values of the appraisals process are consistent with the widely held academic values related to the improvement of academic quality and the elimination of programs of unacceptable quality, universities are willing to invest in improving program quality where necessary, and are shielded from public scrutiny when improvements are needed. Faculty have a sense of ownership in the process and see it as useful and non-threatening in that the information provided to appraisals consultants will not be used against

824. One of the primary benefits of the OCGS appraisal process is that it provides the Graduate Deans with the means to prevent programs of poor or marginal quality from going forward to the university Senates for approval. Without the appraisals process there would likely be far more graduate programs in the Ontario university system.

them in their own performance appraisals. Faculty also view the appraisals process as a useful tool when they are bidding for additional resources within their institutions, although some faculty view the leveraging effect that the appraisal process can exert on institutional budgets as a means to distort internal budgetary considerations.

This kind of process provides enormous incentive to quietly eliminate programs rather than have the government or its agencies formally cancel programs with the attendant negative publicity. It is also consistent with Fleming's observations regarding the subtle way in which Ontario universities appear to prefer to relinquish varying degrees of institutional autonomy to the state:

Most of the process by which the status of the universities has been transformed has been carried out by unwritten or obliquely written understandings, by "gentlemen's agreements," by informal assumptions of obligations, by voluntary avoidance of provocative actions, and by a common acceptance by government and universities of responsibilities imposed on both by the needs and demands of the community.⁸²⁵

Such processes and understandings would not be possible in the context of a system-wide planning assessment that would involve comparative evaluations and have potentially negative public, financial and reputational consequences for particular institutions.

University behaviour suggests adherence to the belief that once something enters the public domain, entering the political domain is not far behind. While the popularity of the annual *Maclean's Magazine* university rankings attest to the public thirst for comparative performance information, this recognition exacerbates a deep-seated resistance to formal, public planning processes. Ontario universities have again and again rejected any notion of classifying, tiering or freezing the institutional structure as it is, even though it has been

825. W.G. Fleming, *op cit.*, pp. 20-21.

relatively stable over the past 15 years and the institutions could be easily characterized as research intensive (6), doctoral (4) and comprehensive (7) using the Carnegie classification of higher education institutions. This characteristic of Ontario universities, which I call “status anxiety” is buttressed by the government’s initial emphasis on egalitarian funding policies and is manifest in the universities’ demand for interinstitutional equity of treatment and opportunity as the foundation of the government-university relationship. This approach provides the veneer necessary to maintain a “parity of esteem” among unequal institutions. Even though modifications to the funding formula for universities has led to substantial differences among institutions in terms of the level of public support each derives per student (on a BIU basis), and the extent to which the formula reflects both horizontal and vertical equity measures, equitable treatment of the institutions under the terms of the basic operating grant has come to be viewed as a fundamental principle underlying the relationship between universities and the provincial government.

In a university system where there is little diversity in terms of program standards, programmatic diversity is a key element of institutional role differentiation and institutional specialization. Yet, the Ontario system has largely resisted this kind of diversity despite the efforts of various Ministers, OCUA and the recommendations of commissions since the 1960s. The graduate program appraisals process may even contribute to program standardization since appraisals committees have often had difficulty assessing the quality of unique and innovative programs.⁸²⁶ Indeed, with the exception of Trent University, institutions have refused to

826. Observation by Maurice Yeates, Executive Director, Ontario Council on Graduate Studies, Millcroft Inn, April 23, 1987, from author’s personal notes. That the OCGS appraisals process reinforces program orthodoxy and stifles program innovation has also been noted by Michael Skolnik, ‘Our academic appraisal system needs overhaul’, *Toronto Star*, March 24, 1988, and “How Academic Program Review Can Foster Intellectual Conformity and Stifle Diversity of Thought and Method”, *Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 60, No. 6, November-December, 1989.

formally accept a limited role in the system even if in fact they pursue a differentiated mission of their own making.⁸²⁷

6.2.3 *Why Has There Been So Much Emphasis on Graduate Program Coordination, Planning, Quality and Funding?*

When the undergraduate enterprise constitutes 90% of the university sector's enrolment and generates the bulk of institutional funding entitlements, why has there been such an emphasis on graduate program coordination, planning, quality and funding in Ontario? One could argue that the government's long-standing emphasis on accessibility, deference to university authority in academic matters and respect for the principle of university autonomy caused it to consciously decide not to concern itself with the development of the undergraduate enterprise because in fact that is what they believed that they were paying the universities to do - teach undergraduate students. This line of argument was substantiated to a degree by a senior university official in the Ministry of Education and Training, who stated:

If you asked them [the government] what we are funding, they would say we are paying universities for the very same reason we are paying school boards, and we are paying colleges - we are paying them to teach.⁸²⁸

At the same time, if the government was so concerned about coordinated and planned development of the universities in a system context, the undergraduate enterprise, just by virtue of the magnitude of students served and costs involved, screams out for coordination in terms of who does what and how much of it. Yet, this very magnitude and complexity likely shielded it from the types of undergraduate program review processes undertaken in other

827. It should be noted that Trent University receives annual government support in addition to its operating grant to cover the extra-ordinary costs of pursuing a differentiated academic mission.

828. Interview with a Senior Ministry Official, April 10, 1997.

jurisdictions which took up the planning challenge in the mid-sixties, because a large centralized government bureaucracy normally attends to such processes.

The threat of government intervention in the early 1960s challenged universities to subjugate their competitive ambitions and aspirations as legally autonomous corporate entities to the broader public interest to avoid government intervention. As Ed Monahan, former Executive Director of COU, points out:

First Bissell [President of the University of Toronto] and then Corry [Principal of Queen's University] as Chairs of COU recognized quite rightly, that if the institutions were going to maintain leadership, they would have to do something, so what they did is that they produced appraisals and assessments.⁸²⁹

Given the emphasis universities have placed upon institutional autonomy and the apparent respect for independent universities on the part of the government to the 1980s, one could argue that in view of the publicly expressed concerns about the financial implications of university expansion, graduate program planning and coordination was the least that the government could afford to demand of the institutions at the time, and it was something the institutions were prepared to concede if it would deflect government intervention from the bulk of its core business and finances at the undergraduate level. It was largely a successful strategy which, until the early 1980's, diverted government and OCUA's attention away from all but the undergraduate professional programs.

Compared to most other jurisdictions, Ontario's emphasis on graduate program planning and quality is rather unique. In fact, the government has never required any form of quality assurance of existing undergraduate programs as a condition of eligibility for public funding, as is the case with respect to graduate programs. With respect to new undergraduate

829. Interview with Ed Monahan, April 10, 1997.

programs government accepts the attestation of individual university Senates that undergraduate program quality is of an acceptable level.

Of course, because universities consider that their status confers monopoly rights, they have been insistent that the programs of both offshore university-level institutions operating in Ontario with the permission of the Minister, and applicants for privately funded university status (neither of which would be eligible for requesting public support), should be required to undergo a “made-in-Ontario” quality appraisal. At the same time, reliant upon the assessment of their own university Senates for the maintenance of undergraduate standards, the Ontario universities had no externally-validated process in place to assess the quality of their own, publicly assisted undergraduate programs. In addition, Ontario universities insisted that the colleges of applied arts and technology (CAATs) establish a process to determine quality standards and accreditation in order to facilitate credit transfer between the CAATs and the universities. This, in particular, focused attention within government circles on the glaring absence of any such central quality review process pertaining to the university undergraduate enterprise. The former Chair of the Council of Regents recalls the point being raised during the *Vision 2000* exercise:

The university folks, in terms of *Vision 2000*, were very supportive of the notion of all college programs having clear and relevant and consistent province-wide standards for all their programs. That led to CSAC [the College Standards and Accreditation Council]. The university folks were...insistent that in order for college graduates and their credentials to be fully recognized, CSAC was a very important characteristic of the lay of the land. The real hypocrisy is, of course, that when someone from the university community mentioned this at a steering committee meeting, I was in the Chair and said “Yes, that’s a good point. Of course, you folks have nothing that resembles outcome standards for anything at the undergraduate level....”⁸³⁰

830. Interview with Charles Pascal, April 15, 1997.

Charles Pascal subsequently ended up in the position of Deputy Minister of Education and Training, just as OCUA's advice regarding a process of undergraduate program quality audits was delivered to the Minister. Under the circumstances, COU's position appeared increasingly foolish and hypocritical. In a last minute effort to avoid government imposition of an externally directed quality audit process, in 1994, COU announced its intention to introduce a process of undergraduate program review audits to assure the ongoing improvement of undergraduate education.

In addition, it could be argued that some of the universities purposefully drew government into a more active role in planning and coordinating the development of the graduate enterprise in the hope that government would arbitrate among the competing institutional aspirations and decide in favour of the more developed and well-established institutions where graduate work was already well underway. The fierce competition for highly valuable and relatively scarce graduate students and associated scarce research dollars motivated the older, more established universities to seek a government enforced rationalization of graduate work which would favour the *status quo* by limiting competition for graduate students and preventing the newer universities from opening programs that would draw students and research dollars away from existing institutions. That AUCC sponsored the Corry-Bonneau review of the rationalization of university research suggests that the issue of destructive competition for graduate programs and research dollars was politicized at both the provincial and national level. That universities did not encourage government to become involved in undergraduate program coordination and planning to a similar degree, reflected:

- a) that undergraduate students were generally in sufficient supply, and that the marginal dollars attached to marginal increases in undergraduate enrolments were not substantial; and b) that

in general, universities wanted to maintain as much autonomy as possible and, therefore, did not want system-planning undertaken because it placed limits on their ability to pursue activities that they might consider to be in their interest.

6.2.4 *The Impact of OCUA and AAC on Planning and Coordination*

From 1980 onward, OCUA contributed only marginally to increasing programmatic and institutional diversity, and to establishing graduate, undergraduate and professional programs in response to market needs. Exceptions occurred when OCUA raised the issues of system coordination and planning in the context of the new “corridor” funding system in public hearings with the university community in 1987 and held hearings on institutional role and goal statements in 1988. However, OCUA failed to develop procedures to ensure the termination of obsolete or duplicative existing programs, credit transferability, or greater role differentiation although these had all been stated government objectives at various points in time.

While limited in scope, the OCUA program funding approval criteria for new undergraduate and graduate programs did shape (or distort) institutional academic planning decisions to a degree. Their sheer existence forced sponsoring departments, when developing a program, to consider provincial and national levels of student demand, need for graduates, justification for duplication of existing programs and the impact on the enrolment of existing programs at other Ontario universities, in addition to academic quality. As Peter George, President of McMaster University noted, the OCUA program funding process had less impact in later years as institutional budgets tightened and administrators became more concerned about the internal redistributive impacts of new program developments:

Those OCUA criteria did make universities think harder...so proposals that came forward to OCUA were more well thought out than maybe they had been at one time. New programs grew up like mushrooms. ...As resources became scarcer, universities were making harder decisions as the program was being developed. When it got out of the university a lot of hard decisions had been made, whereas at one time, ...anything got out of the university because resources weren't that hard to come by. Certainly by the late eighties and certainly in the nineties, we don't put forward new proposals willy nilly...We have to make harder decisions internally around resource allocation and I think that has led to better screening processes...⁸³¹

As of 1990-91, OCUA had delegated all program-related planning and regulatory functions and responsibilities to its Academic Advisory Committee (AAC). While OCUA retained responsibility for program-related policy development, even in this regard, it had come to rely heavily on AAC's advice. On OCUA's behalf, AAC provided public accountability through regular monitoring of the OCGS appraisals process. The discussion papers produced by AAC in the early 1990s, with the encouragement of OCGS, reflected an attempt to fill the vacuum that existed in terms of system-level research and data required to undertake system-wide academic planning decisions. While providing substantive findings and recommendations on which future OCUA program funding decisions could be based, such endeavours were not accorded a high priority by OCUA. OCUA effectively retarded AAC's production of the papers by limiting the resources available, which eventually precluded further such undertakings. In many respects, AAC's development of discussion papers resulted from the closure of ACAP, OCUA's abandonment of the academic planning efforts characteristic of its early years, and OCUA's rejection of the role the universities had recommended it adopt during the 1987 and 1988 hearings on system planning and role differentiation, which would have involved OCUA in more data gathering and synthesis. It

831. Interview with Peter George, April 9, 1997.

illustrates the degree to which the need persists for a forum in which issues related to academic development - "who does what and how much of it" - can be impartially aired and debated.

The regulatory nature of the program approvals process, and its impact only on the margin where new programs were concerned, contributed to a coordinated and planned system in a very limited way. At the same time, the existence of the process did cause the internalization of the criteria within institutions. This was borne out by the very few negative funding recommendations that were made over the years. Most programs that were not approved were rejected out of "truth-in-advertising"⁸³² concerns or for lack of evidence of societal need and student demand. In some instances, it was clear that the OCUA program approvals process provided university administrators with a "stick" to wield over determined faculty with visions of academic expansion and short of that, a court of last resort for those administrators unable to contain departmental aspirations.

The government's preoccupation with the management of the university system through financial instruments that provided the universities with incentives and disincentives kept OCUA focused on developing advice in that context. At the same time, OCUA's annual advice, rooted as it was in these same financial incentives and disincentives, ensured that financial issues rather than planning issues continued to preoccupy government. The dearth of OCUA staff made it very difficult, if not impossible for OCUA to undertake both financial and academic coordination and planning initiatives simultaneously. This effectively ensured that the academic coordination and planning of the Ontario university system was little more

832. OCUA considered the assurance of "truth-in-advertising" to be an aspect of its consumer protection function. To ensure "truth-in-advertising" OCUA confirmed that each program approved for funding eligibility had a program name and a degree designation that was consistent with its curriculum. For a discussion of the Academic Advisory Committee's role in relation to "truth-in-advertising" considerations see Ontario Council on University Affairs, "Advisory Memorandum 96-I, Streamlining the Program Funding Approvals Process", *Twenty Second Annual Report 1995-96*, Toronto: Ministry of Education and Training, p. 225.

than an artifact of financial administration. However, this should in no way detract from the extremely important information sharing and accountability functions that AAC undertook on behalf of OCUA in relation to the OCGS appraisals process. In addition, the annual observations that AAC provided OCUA with respect to trends in new programs proposed for funding eligibility provided OCUA with regular insight into the rate and nature of new program development, should OCUA have chosen to use it.

6.2.5 Conclusions with respect to Coordination and Planning Efforts in Ontario

While it is tempting to argue that the recent closure of OCUA and the approach to program funding taken by the Ministry of Education and Training has turned back Ontario's system-planning and coordination clock to the pre-Spink's era, one must recognize the dramatically different circumstances in which the university sector finds itself today. The sector is mature, the physical infrastructure is in place and the programmatic palette is comprehensive. New programs are largely based on existing restructured or rationalized offerings. Institutional and program growth is no longer a dominant issue. Institutional evolution is ongoing but the pace of change is relatively slow when compared to the late 1950s and 1960s. Political emphasis has been placed squarely on institutional planning. In such an environment, central issues related to system planning (number, location, size of institutions, institutional role and mission, program scope, and inter-institutional articulation) have been largely settled, and revisiting them is severely constrained by the current fiscal context of contraction.

The maturity of Ontario's university system, institutional experience with academic planning and funding criteria, widespread acceptance of the value and merit of the OCGS

graduate program quality appraisals process, the development of procedures for systematic review of undergraduate program quality, and severe and ongoing fiscal contraction/constraint facing Ontario universities for the foreseeable future are likely to provide strong incentives for institutions to develop academic programs consistent with system needs and discourage the maintenance and establishment of programs of poor quality or programs of limited need and demand. At the moment, in a fiscally constrained environment, centralized control does not appear necessary but enhanced coordination may be warranted. In the short-term, this new unregulated environment may very well produce outcomes which will match or better the outcomes of the former, more regulated regime. However, should the fiscal constraints worsen or be substantially removed, then the current structure certainly possesses the potential for program contraction or proliferation that may be neither consistent with public priorities nor socially responsive.

In addition, issues such as program privatization and program closures may pose immediate challenges to Ontario's universities in terms of system coordination. In an environment of fiscal contraction and deregulation, new needs will be met readily where demand from students and employers is high. However, access may be limited by institutional efforts to privatize high demand programs, particularly in professional fields where university programs typically perform a credentialing and gate-keeping function, effectively controlling access to lucrative professional careers. And what of the core academic disciplines? Will institutions driven by competitive forces in a deregulated environment maintain core academic programs with low enrolment such as Classics and small, unique, high-cost, undergraduate and graduate/research programs, many of which are in the pure sciences? Will graduate studies in the humanities, particularly study in modern languages, be sacrificed as part of a rational academic planning process undertaken by individual universities, with the collective result that

there will be an insufficient number or no such programs remaining in Ontario within a few years? Within current levels of funding, will institutions shift their teaching emphasis from the undergraduate enterprise to the graduate enterprise jeopardizing achievement of the government's accessibility objectives? Where will the ironing out of competing institutional decisions to close similar programs occur in the new environment? Who will ensure that core academic disciplines to the doctoral level are maintained somewhere in the province of Ontario?

Perhaps what is needed in the current environment is an ACAP in reverse to reconcile universities' competing desires to off-load uneconomic program offerings in order to make more efficient and effective use of scarce public resources and to adjudicate competing institutional desires to reduce the size of their undergraduate enterprise so as to increase access to professional and graduate programs. This is the face of the new challenges for coordination and planning which currently have no locus for resolution either among institutions or in the public sphere.

State-of-the-art knowledge about Ontario's programmatic strengths and weakness currently resides within the OCGS appraisals committees. However, it is OCGS' position that the cost of tapping into this resource for planning purposes, would not be worth the risk of jeopardizing the future of the appraisals process and the very existence of OCGS itself. The likelihood of OCGS adopting a planning role of any sort is, therefore, slim. Since the demise of ACAP, OCGS has repeatedly rejected a planning mandate for itself, even with respect to its series of discipline surveys undertaken in the 1980s, which avoided institutional identification as a condition of institutional support for the endeavour. The ACAP experience, however, does suggest that should a structure and process be developed for academic planning

and coordination, it should be undertaken at arms-length from the institutions and from government.

The study of academic program planning and development among Ontario universities is a microcosm of the broader trends in system planning and coordination. It parallels the transition of Ontario universities from fully independent, self-contained institutions to institutions voluntarily participating in a system, with ever greater dependence on public money for operating and capital expenses, and ever greater expectations for accountability to assure the public of responsible stewardship. The movement toward collective autonomy was tempered by the limitations of the structures of COU as a voluntary organization. As the Ontario university sector matured, responsibility for academic program coordination and planning became a shared responsibility between universities, individually and collectively, and government. Most recently, government has opted to minimize its role in university affairs, resulting in more of a role for individual institutions and less for government and the collectivity than has been the case since the late 1960s and early 1970s.

As described in Chapter 5, allocative trend-modifying is perhaps the planning model which most closely characterizes the type of planning which has occurred and is possible in the Ontario university sector. The exploitive opportunity-seeking planning model, in which the main objective is to make the most of the future by capitalizing on existing trends should probably not be aspired to, nor encouraged, given society's poor track record in successfully projecting future enrolments, manpower needs and economic prospects. The centralized control over universities which would be required to conduct normative goal-oriented planning in Ontario has been unpalatable to the Ontario government which has proved to be indifferent

to the lack of planning, and completely unacceptable to the universities. Hence, formal system coordination and planning remains largely untried in Ontario and one could argue, based on Skolnik and Jones' research, that it is an approach that is "un-Canadian".

6.3 Looking Back

This research has focused largely on the perspective of universities as represented by Presidents, and the government as represented by the Ministry of Education and Training and its agencies because this is the primary context in which the debate about system coordination and planning and university-government relations in Ontario has occurred. Yet, the Ministry's ability to influence university development is fundamentally dependent upon decisions made higher up in government with respect to the total amount of public resources available. Decisions of this nature are made in the context of the province's broader social and economic objectives rather than in the context of postsecondary education policy. Similarly, in the context of university governing arrangements, Presidents are subject to significant restraints imposed by their positional relationship to university governing bodies, collectively bargained agreements or special plans defining terms and conditions of employment with faculty and staff, and a wide variety of other legal arrangements and political influences flowing from their institutions' relationships with other public sources of funding including other government ministries both federally and provincially, as well as private funding sources. Thus, in some ways, Ontario's historic lack of a single locus of responsibility for coordination and planning with an associated mandate, resources and powers to play such a role effectively can be considered a reflection of the fragmentation of power and control both within the sector itself and within government. Further, the fragmentation of interests among the university

community writ large in terms of role, i.e. students, faculty, administrators, support staff, and function i.e. teaching intensive, research intensive, and by discipline cannot be overlooked as a factor contributing to the sector's resistance to greater government intervention.

While the shortcomings of existing structures and processes for system coordination and planning were clearly examined over the past thirty years by the steady stream of reports, commissions and initiatives identified in this paper, many Ministers chose to avoid the complex policy issues and political ramifications of institutional differentiation by role and function. Rather than test the political muscle of the university community, and the regional sensitivities of Cabinet colleagues, Ministers have opted for a more politically-neutral approach by approving across the board funding increases or reductions to the system as a whole. In this way they avoided both the policy and the political implications of institutional differentiation and selective retrenchment when funding levels were deemed by the institutions to be insufficient. As a result, the individual universities were left to muddle through, and to do so, it could be argued, at taxpayers' expense in that a more coordinated and planned system would require greater institutional differentiation and, therefore, be less costly and pose less risk to quality.

Ministers, such as Bette Stephenson and Dave Cooke, appeared to be convinced of the need for change, but were denied the opportunity to act on their convictions due to the timing of provincial elections. At such points in time, opportunities to approach the development of the university sector in new ways were lost, although one must add that the regional politics around the Cabinet table may have, in the end, thwarted even their best efforts to realize alternative visions for an Ontario university system. In retrospect, politics has been an agent of stability, shielding the sector from change in respect to its relations with the Ministry

responsible for universities.

The record of choices that have been made over the past 50 years suggests that successive Ontario governments have placed a premium on the achievement of their accessibility and quality objectives, and as a result, Ontario universities have enjoyed a significant degree of autonomy so long as accessibility has been provided to all qualified applicants.

Using Berdahl's concepts of procedural and substantive autonomy, Ontario universities continue to enjoy a relatively high degree of procedural autonomy, in terms of how the university performs its functions and provide its services. They are not micro-managed by government. While government has regulated tuition fee increases, regulations in this regard are becoming less restrictive. Public support, provided as a block grant, enables institutions to manage provincial funds as they see fit within general guidelines. Human resource policies, collective bargaining, property management and asset management are all institutional responsibilities. On all counts, one must conclude that relative to many publicly funded systems of similar magnitude and cost in other North American and Commonwealth jurisdictions, Ontario universities operate largely independent of government direction in terms of fiscal and administrative decision-making. With respect to administrative decisions, universities arguably face much greater loss of management flexibility from collectively bargained agreements with faculty and staff than they do from government regulation.

Substantive autonomy among Ontario universities has also remained arguably high in the post World War II era. Universities, as legally autonomous institutions, may offer any and all degree programs (with the exception of Nipissing and Ryerson, which have academic mandates that are constrained in legislation) and only when funding eligibility is sought does

government have the opportunity to indirectly shape the development of the academic programming available.

In addition, I would argue that Ontario universities enjoy a high degree of policy autonomy. Policy development pertaining to universities has been a function government has shared with universities to a significant extent. Extensive consultation with the university community has been characteristic of the approach taken toward the development of new university-related policy initiatives. During OCUA's tenure, the rationale for university policy was made explicit and public in its annual reports. Further, government agencies have typically displayed strong university representation and university faculty and administrators have more often than not, provided leadership to government agencies with responsibility for universities as well as the commissions and inquiries about university development undertaken on behalf of government. In the result, universities have largely continued to define for themselves the degree to which they have been responsive and accountable to the total needs of society in terms of outputs or outcomes and the balance this represents between their teaching, research, service and administration functions.

Philosophically, Ontario governments have, along with the universities themselves, generally favoured decentralization over centralization as guiding organizing principles. Organizational theorists have suggested that decentralized organizations are more flexible, more efficient and more appropriate to professionals than highly centralized and bureaucratic organizational forms. In some ways, the government's relationship with universities parallels that of its relationship to self-regulated professions except that within a self-regulated profession there is a single locus of responsibility for control and coordination with an associated mandate, resources and powers to play such a role effectively, which has never

existed in the university sector. The professional stature of the university community and the perceived importance of the universities' functions to economic prosperity and social mobility have provided the universities with a power-base that has helped them to resist overt incursions of institutional autonomy. Carolyn Tuohy has described "power" as a two sided coin: "One side of the coin is control; the other is autonomy. Power can be used to bend others to your will, and it can be used to resist being bent to the will of others".⁸³³ The limited number of universities relative to, for example hospitals; the civic pride universities engender in their communities; and the economic benefits that accrue to their local region make them politically potent institutions, particularly within a provincial political system based on regional representation. It can be argued that the universities' power of "resistance" has so far largely neutralized the government's "will" (or at least the degree government has expressed its "will") to see universities change.

At the same time, autonomous universities have been prepared to genuflect at the financial alter of public support. As Harry Arthurs indicated, universities

have become habituated to "government intervention" in its most seductive form: subvention. We crave subvention: financial support through direct operating grants, land grants and capital grants, research contracts, students aid, tax credits and other fiscal measures by which governments effectively sustain almost all public and private universities around the world.⁸³⁴

Universities were most willing to concede to centralized control of coordination and planning matters in instances where government had buttressed decisions made by the collectively with financial consequences. Decisions about "who does what academically, and how much of it"

833. Carolyn Tuohy, "The Struggle for Professional Power: Subtler Forms of Status-seeking for the '80s", *Policy Options*, March/April 1981, p. 34.

834. Harry Arthurs, "The Question of Legitimacy", *Governments and Higher Education - The Legitimacy of Intervention*, Cicely Watson (Ed.), Toronto: Higher Education Group, Ontario Institute for Studies in Higher Education, 1987, pp. 9-10.

that resulted in financial winners and losers were ultimately too divisive an undertaking for a voluntary association established to promote the interests of all members. Universities were looking, not for a central planner, but for a referee. Decisions about which university programs should merit public support, therefore, were gladly placed in government's lap.

While divesting themselves of a degree of autonomy over decisions about which programs should be publicly funded, university priorities with respect to their fiscal relations with government and government policies have emphasized interinstitutional equity, maintenance of quality, stability and predictability. This has facilitated a "parity of esteem" among differentiated institutions in their relationship with government, which in the context of a more deregulated and competitive environment toward which the university sector appears to be moving, is beginning to evaporate. The teaching intensive universities in particular, stand to lose access to funding for research under such a regime and so continue to resist institutional differentiation through public funding. These universities argue that equity is a fundamental tenet of university-government relations:

Although there is wide diversity in the size and mission of Ontario's universities - and in their budgets - equitable treatment of each institution under the basic funding formula is a fundamental principle underlying the relationship between the universities and the provincial government.⁸³⁵

In addition, the universities, while responding in a very direct way to financial incentives and disincentives, appear to have been influenced by the public statements of government Ministers, officials and agencies. Institutional behaviour has been strongly influenced by beliefs about what the government "might" do. Public statements by the Minister or the Premier have the potential to set the environment, not only in system-level

835. Letter from Leonard W. Conolly, President, Trent University to the Honourable John Snobelen, Minister of Education and Training, January 29, 1996.

planning but also in institutional, faculty and departmental planning fora.

Even though the structures for coordination of university activities and the resolution of university-government conflict were imperfect, the government's decision to remain less interventionist in university affairs than it could have been, and its decision not to strengthen the structures for coordination and planning suggests that there has been a general case of policy apathy toward issues of university sector coordination and planning and a willingness to accept that a relatively autonomous university system could meet public policy objectives at least as well as a large permanent bureaucracy orchestrating a centralized process. Such an approach also left Ministers and governments with more discretion as to the allocation of funds to areas of particular interest to them.

No broad based research exists to allow one to conclude definitively that a centrally coordinated and planned system ultimately produces more socially and economically desirable results than the Ontario system does with its relatively limited central coordination and planning machinery, structures and practices. However as fiscal constraints have increased, recent governments have recognized the shortcomings of having few means by which to ensure that the funds they disburse to the university sector are used to support their key objectives. Further, theory suggests that deliberate institutional differentiation generally lowers overall delivery costs of university education thereby making more efficient and effective use of scarce public resources. Proponents of free and autonomous universities, however, would not wish to see universities become instruments of government policy for fear that it would destroy their ability to fulfill their fundamental mission of generating and disseminating knowledge and its applications, which are by nature long-term objectives, in contrast to the short-term nature of government objectives which may change with a change of government.

While the recommendations of the various reports, commissions and inquiries reviewed in this paper went largely unheeded, they served to raise alternatives and enunciate goals and objectives which became embedded in the glacial nature of the debate around system coordination and planning in Ontario. At best some had a steering effect and at a minimum, others played a consciousness raising and information sharing role.

In one sense, the regular commissioning of system-level reviews provides universities and governments with a map of the terrain to be manoeuvred by the university sector in the future, identifies alternative paths by which to traverse the terrain, the resources and incentives required for successful navigation of each route, and the structures to ensure that the universities' resources will end up where society needs them most. To date both the universities and government appear to have chosen the path of least resistance.

Table 5 provides a summary of factors that have facilitated and inhibited the exercise of system coordination and planning in Ontario.

6.4 Looking Ahead

Many of the coordinating functions undertaken in other jurisdictions in order better to serve the public interest and ensure efficient and effective use of public funds will continue to be formally unattended to within the Ontario university sector. While the former functions of OCUA technically revert to the Ministry of Education and Training, it appears that the Council of Ontario Universities is being used by the Ministry to fulfill a surrogate advisory role. If financial winners and losers emerge from COU recommendations while it engages in shuttle diplomacy with the Ministry, then mistrust and suspicion among members will increase, COU's motives will be challenged and its future may be jeopardized. Institutions will

Table 5

Factors Affecting System Coordination and Planning in Ontario 1945-1996	
Facilitating Factors	Debilitating Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • threat of government intervention • access to additional public funding • threat of financial penalty or financial disadvantage • opportunities for quality improvement and the enhancement of prestige (e.g. OCGS appraisal process) • trusting relationship among parties where detailed information could be shared in a confidential context (e.g. AAC-OCGS) • political pressure for responsiveness to societal needs • severe fiscal constraint 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • government's emphasis on province-wide access, quality standards and on a financial relationship with university system • university insistence on equal treatment, equal opportunity, parity of esteem in relationship with government, "status anxiety" • political dynamic of an area-based legislature • timing of political processes (e.g. provincial elections, changes in Ministerial leadership) • lack of sustained emphasis on system-wide objectives due to priority attached to achievement of government's accessibility objectives/ isolation of goals • failure to operationalize system coordination and planning objectives and goals, policy apathy • vague notions of system accountability; high levels of institutional autonomy • mismatch between available structures to perform system coordination and planning in the government and university sectors and the authority/powers of such structures to meet expectations related to system-wide coordination and planning • lack of sufficient decision-support data on which to make system-wide decisions • emphasis on incremental change, stability

resort to extensive individual lobbying of Ministers and Ministry officials. In time, the benefits of off-loading political pressures on to some form of disinterested buffer structure are likely to be rediscovered. While COU and OCGS will continue to shoulder responsibilities for system-level academic quality assurance, whether or not the regularized oversight responsibilities provided by AAC will be picked up in a serious and comprehensive fashion by the Ministry is, as yet, uncertain.

To summarize, the Ontario government appears to have opted for an approach to university-government relations that assumes a competition among institutions with no formal state structures responsible for central coordination or planning to mitigate against the inefficiencies that flow from disciplinary and institutional territoriality and self interest. There appears to be no formal collective vision for future university development. Formal structures for self-regulation by the university collectivity exist only in the area of academic program quality. A temporary structure exists with respect to facilitating transfer of academic credit among universities and between universities and colleges.

The government's future role will continue to involve the provision of block grants to universities with minimum accountability requirements and the expectation that universities will endeavour to meet government's public policy objectives, particularly with respect to accessibility. Reductions in public funding to universities are assumed to have created sufficient incentives for universities to use what public funds they receive in as efficient and effective way possible. The incentives and disincentives of the funding allocation mechanism will continue to provide a significant degree of influence in shaping university development - constituting an informal, or unconscious planning strategy on government's part.

Looking ahead, COU will continue to provide a locus for a limited degree of system coordination, largely achieved through information sharing. To the degree that formal planning of university development does occur in Ontario, it will continue to be undertaken primarily at the institutional level. Institutions with less developed formal planning processes, will continue to plan by virtue of the tyranny of shrinking budgets. Pressures are likely to build in support of the establishment of some form of impartial intermediary body at arms-length from the universities and government to perform a coordination, research and information-sharing role and to facilitate the management of the university-government relationship.

Paradoxically, while the government's current approach is much more market-oriented than has been any approach taken to university-government relations since the 1970s, it also has the greatest potential for direct government intervention. As one university president described it, the system is in the process of moving from what presidents consider to be a highly regulated but mostly independent publicly funded sector, to a less regulated but more politically vulnerable sector. He concluded "right now, we are in the worst of both worlds".⁸³⁶

At a leadership summit for university presidents in the mid-1990s, then Minister of Education, Dave Cooke asked university presidents and board chairs: "Who should raise the question of how many law schools, medical schools and faculties of education we should have in Ontario, and who should answer it?" After thirty years of reflection in Ontario, the answers to questions of this nature remain unclear.

836. Interview with Robert Rosehart, President, Lakehead University, April 8, 1997.

Interviews

The following individuals were interviewed in order to confirm and enhance the material used in this study:

Joy Cohnstaedt	Professor, York University, former Chair, Ontario Council on University Affairs
Dave Cooke	Co-Chair, Ontario Education Improvement Commission, Former Minister of Education and Training
William G. Davis	Former Premier of Ontario and former Minister of Education and of Colleges and Universities
Peter George	President of McMaster University, former President of the Council of Ontario Universities and former member of the Ontario Council on University Affairs
Ed Monahan	Former Executive Director of the Council of Ontario Universities, former President of Laurentian University, former Executive Assistant to John Deutsch at Queen's University, former staff member of the Canadian Association of University Teachers
Charles Pascal	Executive Director of the Atkinson Foundation, former Deputy Minister of Education and Training, former Deputy Minister of Community and Social Services, former Chair of the Ontario Premier's Council on Health, Well Being and Social Justice, former Chair of the Ontario Council of Regents, and former President of Sir Sandford Fleming College
Robert Patry	Coordinator - Postsecondary Education, Council of Ministers of Education, Canada
Bob Rosehart	President, Lakehead University
Senior Officials (2)	Postsecondary Division, Ministry of Education and Training
Dale Shipley	Manager, College-University Consortium Council, Council of Ontario Universities

- Bette Stephenson** **Member of The Education Quality and Accountability Office, former member of the Advisory Panel of Future Directions for Postsecondary Education, and former Minister of Education and Colleges and Universities**
- *Lynn Watt** **Former Executive Director of the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies, former member of the Advisory Committee on Academic Planning and former Dean of Graduate Studies at the University of Waterloo**
- *Maurice Yeates** **Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for the Study of Commercial Activity at Ryerson Polytechnical University, former Executive Director of the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies, former Chair of the Geography Discipline Group within the ACAP process and former member of the COU Special Committee to Review Graduate Planning**
- *** **These individuals reviewed drafts of particular chapters and provided written and oral comments.**

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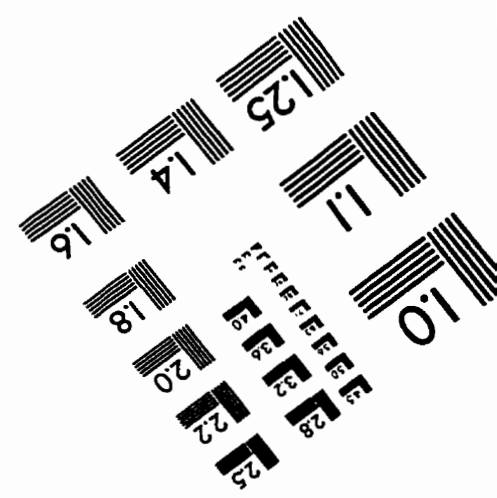
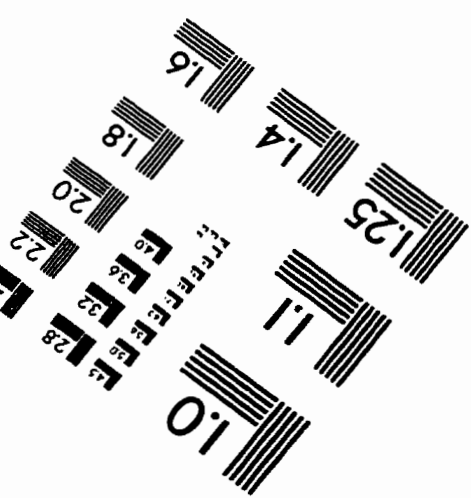
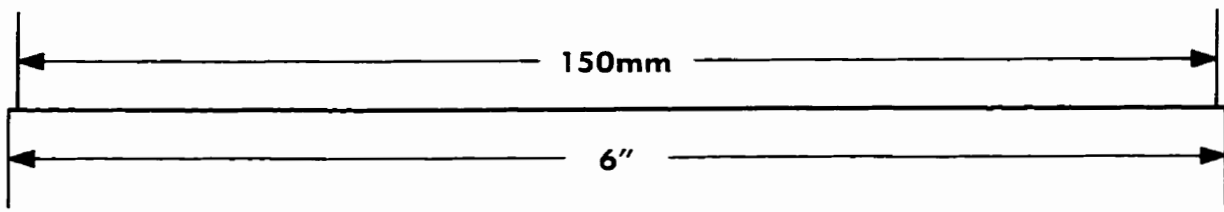
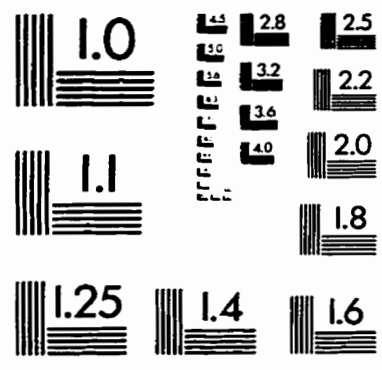
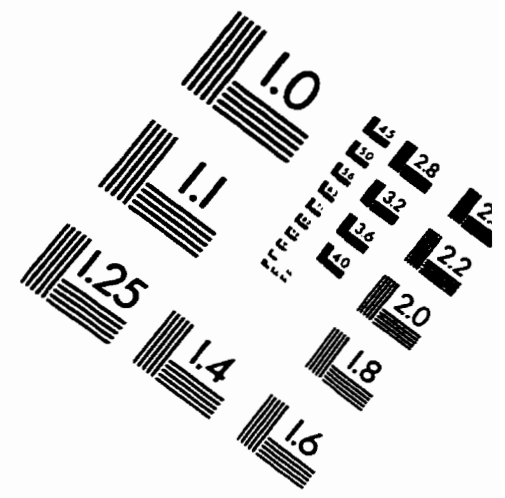
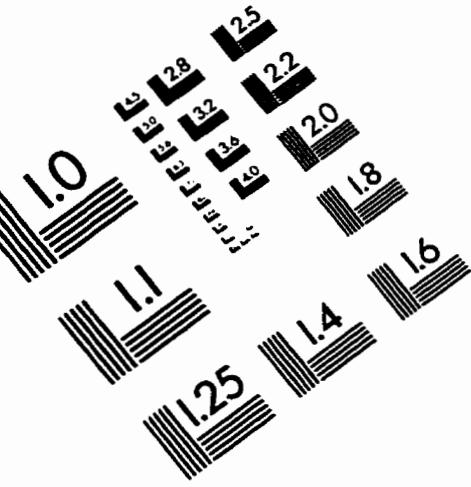
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